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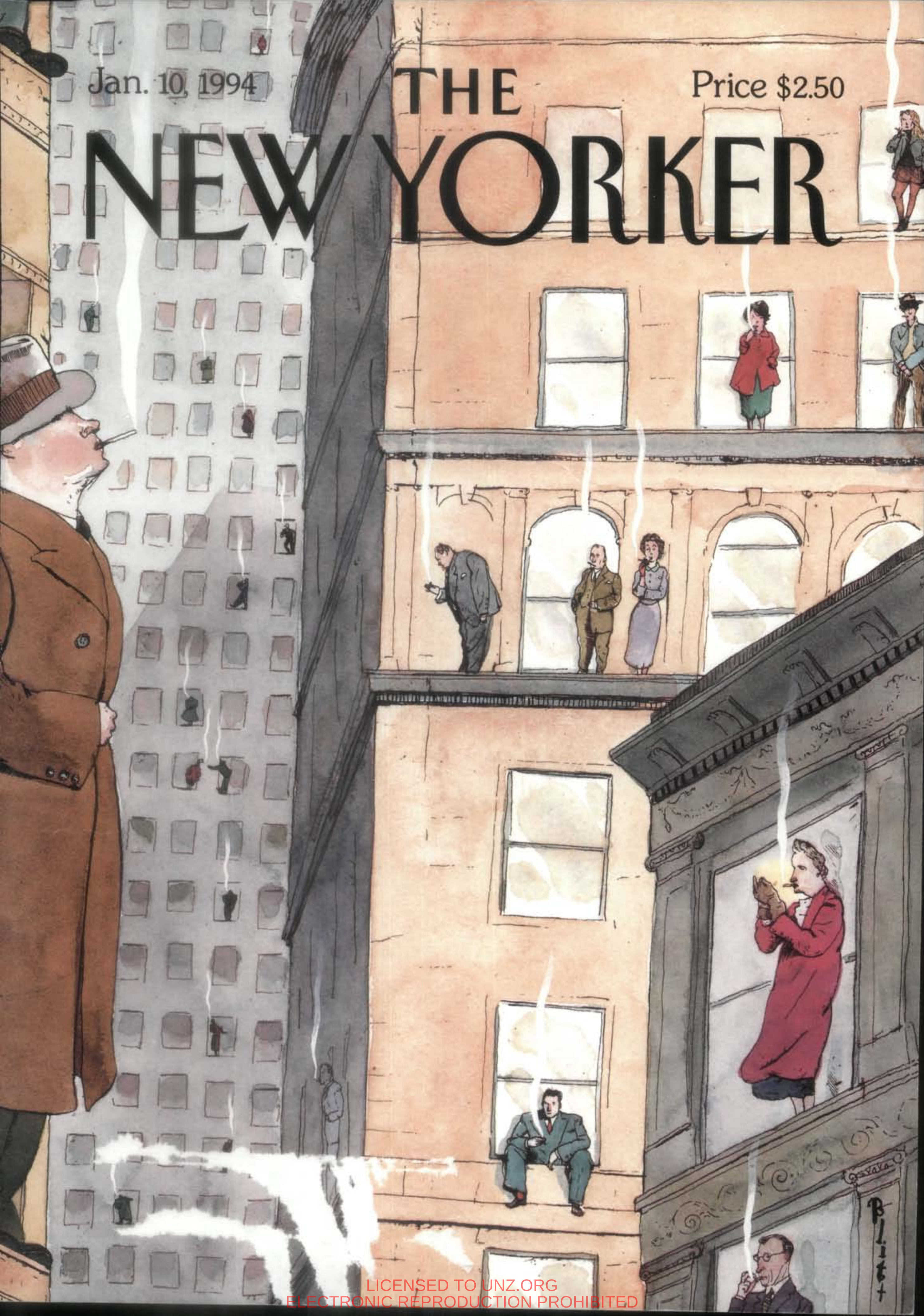

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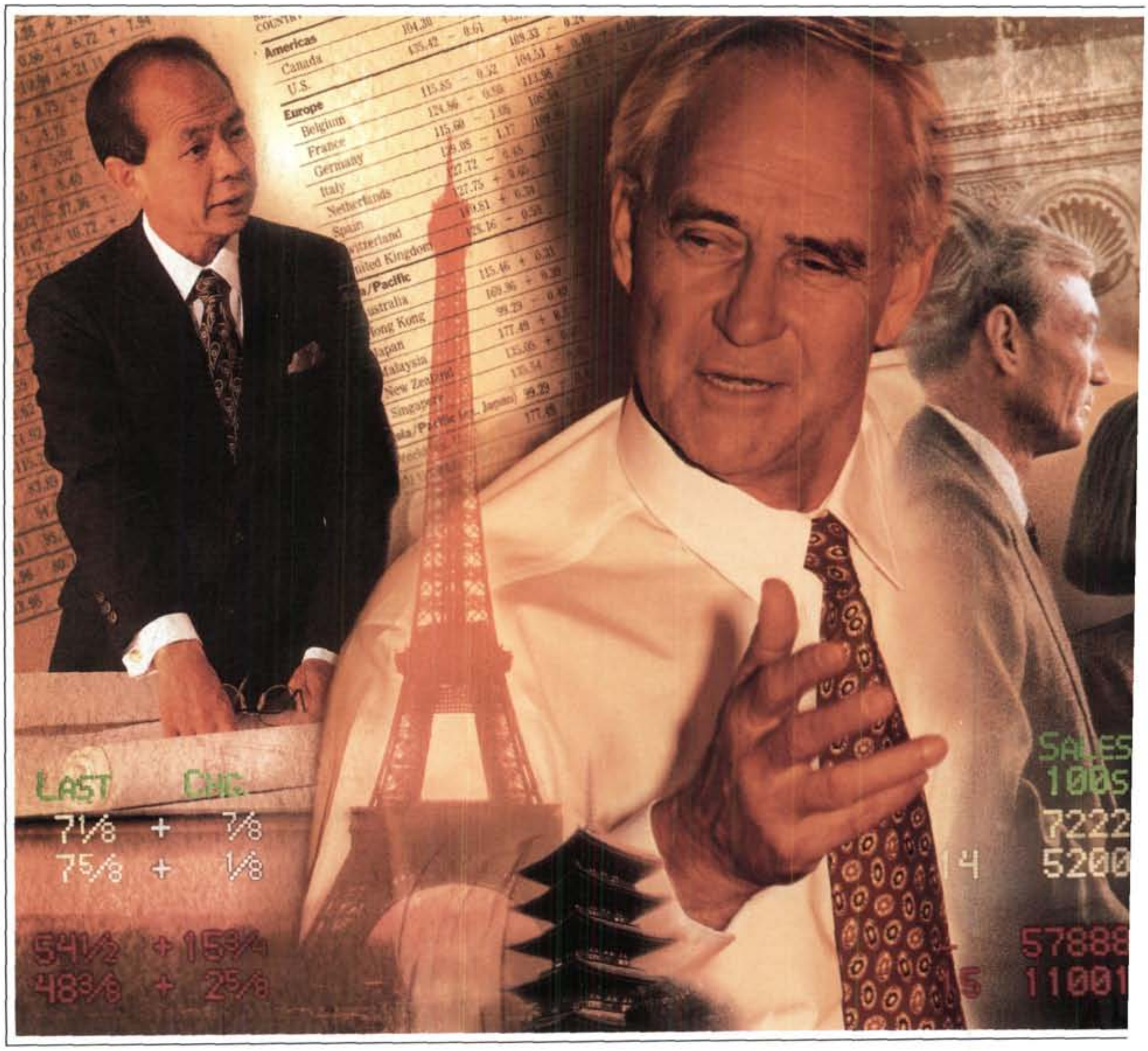
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COMMENT

THE SAME BOAT

A FEW days before Christmas, a small boat loaded with seventeen exhausted refugees made landfall in Miami. Boats so laden turn up almost daily in South Florida. The unusual thing about this one was the composition of its human cargo: seven Cubans and ten Haitians. Cubans and Haitians do not ordinarily travel together. But these had met by chance in the Bahamas, the first stop in their escape from their separate islands, and had shared the costs and the rigors of the rest of the journey. On board, they were simply people from someplace bad trying to get to someplace better; they were far more alike than different. But now that they have made it to the land of liberty their fates will diverge.

The Cubans, it is safe to say, will not be sent back to Cuba. Under a law passed in 1966, arriving Cubans, and only Cubans, are exempted from many of the usual immigration strictures. A year and a day after their arrival, they automatically qualify for status as permanent residents of the United States—the highest immigration classification, one step short of citizenship. Of well over a hundred thousand Cubans who have fled here since 1980, just a few hundred—all of them incarcerated criminals—have been sent back to Cuba.

The Haitians will have a tougher time of it. To avoid deportation, each will have to prove, individually, that he or she would face political persecution on returning home. That will be a hard proposition to sell to the American immigration authorities: since September of 1991, when Haiti's first and only democratically elected President, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was overthrown, about sixteen thousand Haitians have applied to the Immigration and Naturalization Service for political asylum in this country, and only about six hundred have been granted it. At least, they were allowed to apply: many of their compatriots have not been so lucky. Of forty thousand Haitians the United States Coast Guard has intercepted on the high seas since the 1991 military coup, thirty thousand have been forcibly

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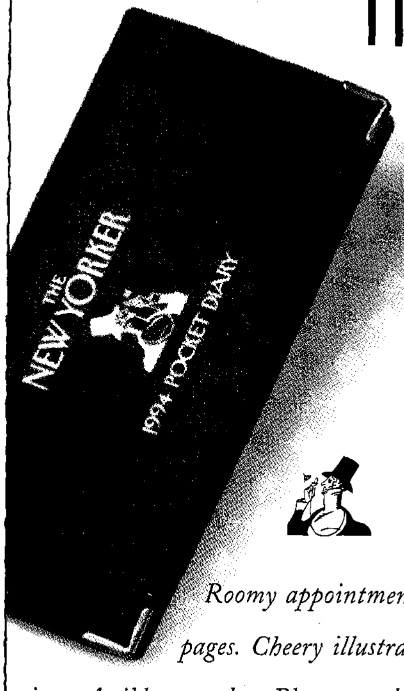

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returned, many without even a pretense of a hearing.

The rationale for the vastly different treatment of Cuban and Haitian refugees is that Cubans face political persecution back home, whereas Haitians are economic refugees, who simply want to have a better life in America. What the second half of this formula overlooks is that since the coup Haiti has been the site of more state-sponsored or state-tolerated political violence than any other country in the hemisphere. Haiti's tyranny is less systematic than Cuba's, but it is currently—and not for the first time—more acute and more violent.

If the Clinton Administration were to begin forcing Cubans back to their island, Fidel Castro might reasonably conclude that the United States does not think, or does not care, that he persecutes his own citizens. So no one should be startled if the deportations of Haitians are seen in that light by General Raoul Cédras and his junta in Port-au-Prince. As it is, the White House is in the absurd position of maintaining simultaneously (a) that the Cédras regime is so criminal that America is justified in using military vessels to enforce a worldwide trade embargo intended to remove it from power and (b) that the Cédras regime is so innocuous that America is justified in using military vessels to return thousands of desperate Haitians to its care, often without even trying to ascertain why they risked their lives to leave.

The continuation of the policy of forcible, summary repatriation of Haitian boat people—a policy begun by President Bush and rightly called cruel by Bill Clinton during the Presidential campaign—has been the most shameful single feature of the Clinton Administration's first year. John Shattuck, the Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, returned from a mid-December trip to Haiti "with a view," he was quoted as telling reporters, "that a policy review is necessary." For this mild statement of the morally obvious, he was roundly rebuked. "It was completely wrong and outrageous and there is enormous anger in the White House," an anonymous official told Steven A. Holmes, of the *Times*. "There will be no review." The issue of the Haitian refugees, it seemed, had finally provoked Washington's passionate indignation. ♦

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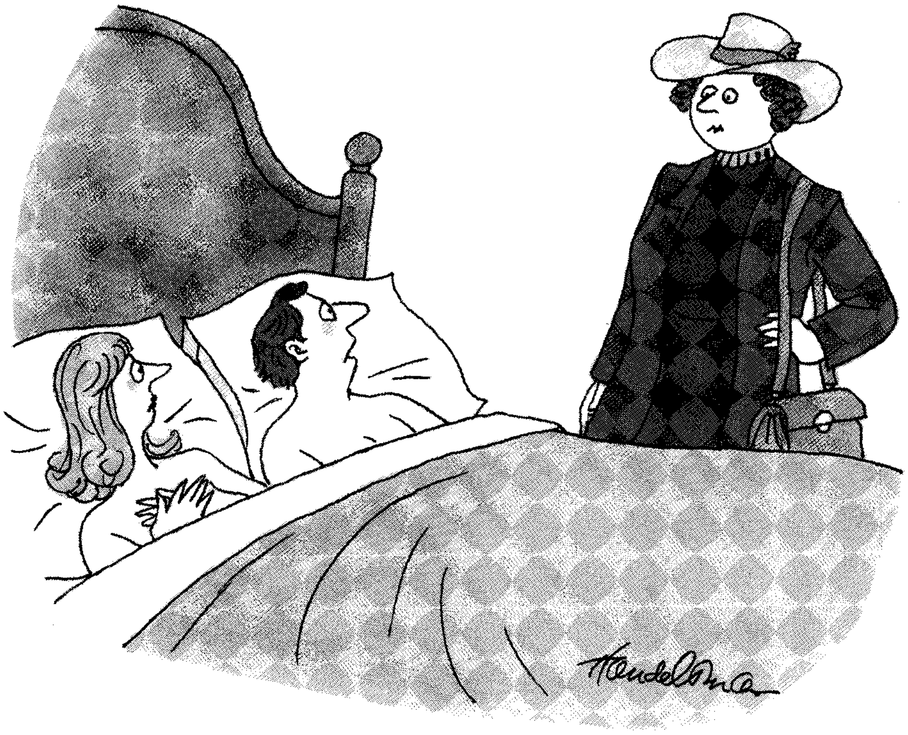

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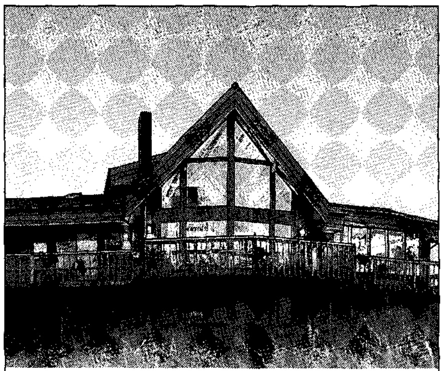

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IN THE MAIL

AFTERTHOUGHT

We are writing to express our dismay over Harold Brodkey's piece in the September 13th *New Yorker.* We're concerned particularly about the treatment in it of our late husbands, John Gardner and Raymond Carver, and of the friendship between them. It calls to mind what Janet Malcolm wrote in the pages of your magazine only a few weeks previously: "After we are dead, the pretense that we may somehow be protected against the world's careless malice is abandoned. . . . The dead cannot be libelled or slandered. They are without legal recourse."

This may be so, but it is careless of you to publish autobiography masquerading as biography. Toward the end of his piece, Brodkey describes a supposed first meeting after many years between John Gardner and his former student Ray Carver. Brodkey writes, "Whenever Carver tried to talk to Gardner, Gardner changed the subject or moved across the room or addressed me or went into another room even when Carver was in mid-speech to him about what it meant to have studied with him. Have I said that Carver was beginning to be famous?"

In fact, the two writers were openly delighted to see each other, talked intently together, and after this occasion visited each other more than once (without benefit of Brodkey's presence). Their friendship was overt, direct, and without hidden agenda. John Gardner was delighted by Ray's success, and supported and added to it as often and as openly as he could, praising him publicly and selecting one of Carver's now famous stories ("Cathedral") for the "Best American Short Stories 1982."

Though dead men cannot defend themselves, those who loved them can try their best to clean up the mess. Of course, the fact that Harold Brodkey himself is ill is not insignificant to us. It makes the task of writing this letter more painful and more delicate. But one may be good to the end or bad to the end—that's a human choice lived every moment. Let us at least clarify that both John Gardner and Raymond Carver, as long as they were alive, were free of resentment and false friendship, and that we wish the same for Mr. Brodkey.

Liz Rosenberg
Binghamton, N.Y.

Tess Gallagher
Port Angeles, Wash.

GOOD SEX

The November 29th Comment discusses Antioch College's rules requiring explicit verbal consent for each level of sexual intimacy. It is no punishment to put desire into words. Antioch's subtle and imaginative mandate is an erotic windfall: an opportunity for undergraduates to discover that wordplay and foreplay can be happily entwined; the chance to reinvent privately the joyless, overexposed arena called "sexual relations." What woman or man on Antioch's campus, or elsewhere, wouldn't welcome the direct question "May I kiss the hollow of your neck?" The possibilities are wonderful—pedagogic, even—as is the idea that language *is* choice.

Julia A. Reidhead
New York City

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.

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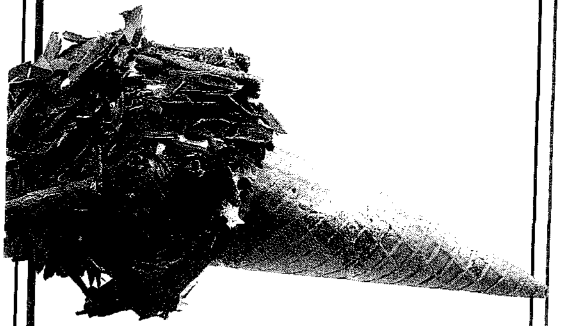

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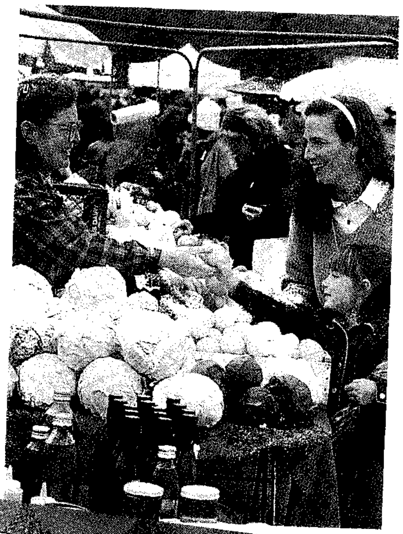

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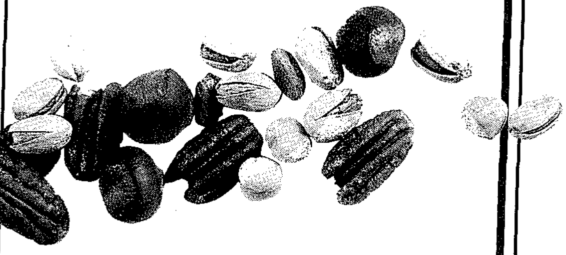

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THE THEATRE

Sister Acts

WITHIN the bustling Toronto theatre community, the playwright Tomson Highway stands tall. His play "Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing" swept the Dora awards (Toronto's version of the Tonys) in 1989, and his comedy "The Rez Sisters" won for outstanding new play a couple of seasons earlier. Although the plays have no characters or story lines in common, they are loose companion pieces: "Dry Lips" offers a glimpse of life in a Native American community from the male point of view (it will be given a staged reading on January 10), while "The Rez Sisters," which just opened at New York Theatre Workshop, focusses on women in a similar position.

In New York, "The Rez Sisters" leans heavily on the skills of the Miguel sisters—three women in their sixties who founded the Spiderwoman Theatre and who for many years have been at the forefront of local Native American performance—and of the Colorado sisters, who founded Coatlicue/Las Colorado Company and Off the Beaten Path. All these women's characters work doggedly to improve their lot; a weekly bingo game is their primary field of dreams. When they discover that Toronto, some two hundred miles to the south, is about to host "the Biggest Bingo in the World," with a million-dollar jackpot, they resolve to visit the big city. To perfect their skills, they engage in a practice session, and invite the theatre audience to play along. The stakes here are modest (twenty dollars), but the artistic rewards are considerable.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

As You Like It—Theatre for a New Audience presents Shakespeare's comedy, directed by Mark Rylance, who also plays Touchstone. Miriam Healy-Louie is Rosalind. Previews begin Jan. 6. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

The Ash Fire—A comedy by Gavin Kostick. Previews through Jan. 8. Opens Jan. 9 at 7. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

Day Standing on Its Head—A play by Philip Kan Gotanda. Previews through Jan. 9 matinée. Opens Jan. 9 at 7:30. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

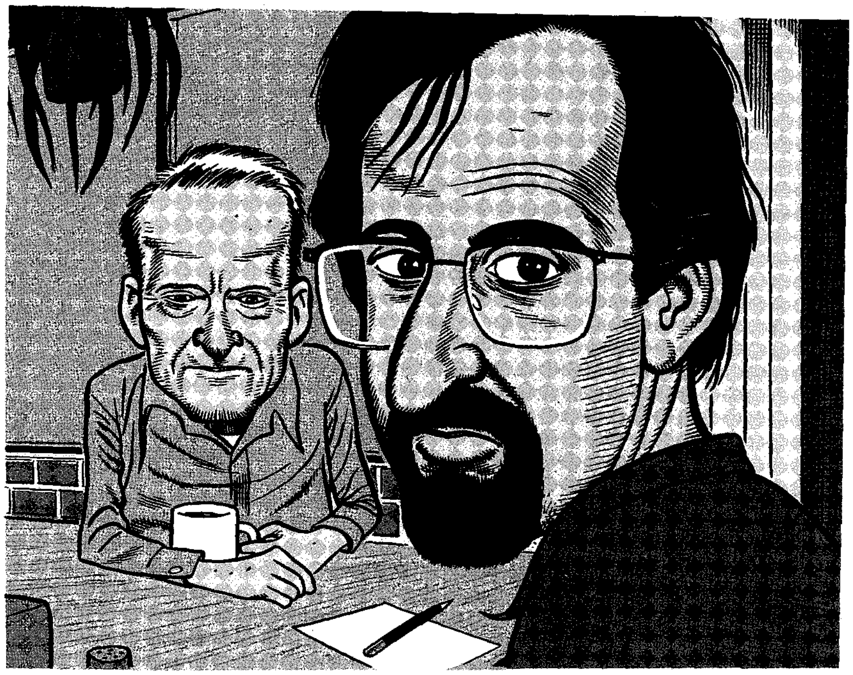
Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing—A single staged reading of Tomson Highway's play. (American Indian Community House, 404 Lafayette St. Jan. 10 at 7. Admission is free, but call 598-0100 to reserve a seat.)

East Texas Hot Links—A play by Eugene Lee about a Southern black community in 1955. The cast includes Loretta Devine, Earle Hyman, and Ed Wheeler. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Edith Wharton—Irene Worth portrays the author of "The Age of Innocence" and "The House of Mirth" in this one-woman show, which she adapted from Wharton's writings. Previews begin Jan. 11. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 508-7150.)

The Government Inspector—The National Actors Theatre presents Nikolai Gogol's satiric comedy. The cast includes Lainie Kazan and Tony Randall. Two previews on Jan. 5. Opens Jan. 6 at 7. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6280.)

Hello, Again—A new musical by Michael John LaChiusa, loosely based on Arthur Schnitzler's play "La Ronde." The cast includes Judy Blazer, John Dossett, John Cameron Mitchell, and Donna Murphy. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)



David Greenberger's "Duplex Planet" Radio Hour," a performance at St. Ann's.

DAN CLOWES

The Illusion—A 1636 play by Pierre Corneille, adapted by Tony Kushner. Previews begin Jan. 7. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

No Man's Land—Christopher Plummer and Jason Robards star in Harold Pinter's 1975 play. Previews begin Jan. 8. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

OPENED RECENTLY

All in the Timing—An evening of six one-act comedies by David Ives. The subjects are various (the death of Trotsky, Philip Glass goes shopping), and the literary technique is sparkling. Directed by Jason McConnell Buzas. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 777-7474.)

Angels in America—"Perestroika," the second half of Tony Kushner's "Angels in America," is a masterpiece. Every line sings with hurt and humor. Epic in scope, superbly acted, and directed with passionate restraint by George C. Wolfe, the play employs an original, impressionistic theatrical vocabulary to show us the heart of a new age. It runs in repertory with the first half, "Millennium Approaches." ("Perestroika" was reviewed in our issue of 12/13/93; "Millennium Approaches," 5/31/93.) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Annie Warbucks—Kathryn Zaremba, an infant phenomenon if ever there was one, has the title role in this beguiling sequel to "Annie." (8/23 & 30/93) (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

Blood Brothers—Willy Russell's musical, with Shaun Cassidy, David Cassidy, and Petula Clark. (5/10/93) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Cyrano: The Musical—The nose have it. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100.)

Family Secrets—Sherry Glaser is the sole, physically adept, very funny performer in this comedy about a Jewish family, which she wrote with Greg Howells. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Four Dogs and a Bone—The "bone" of John Patrick Shanley's satiric comedy is a movie, and the "four dogs" are its producer, writer, and two actresses, who together make the funniest foursome in town. They are played by Loren Dean, Polly Draper, Adam Arkin, and Arabella Field. (11/15/93) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

Greetings!—Tom Dudzick's comedy is a hilarious boy-brings-fiancée-home-at-Christmas story. Aaron Goodwin is terrific as the brother who occasionally becomes possessed by a New Age "entity." The rest of the cast—Lenore Loveman, Darren McGavin, Gregg Edelman and Toby Poser—are also topnotch. Directed by Dennis Zacek. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 967-9077.)

How to Write a Play—Charles Ludlam's wild farce, adapted and directed by and starring Everett Quinton, is a triumph for all concerned. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Sq. 691-2271. Closes Jan. 16.)

Howard Crabtree's Whoop-Dee-Doo!—A witty and topical musical revue. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. For information about tickets, call 777-7474.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Performances of Pirandello's "Enrico IV" alternate with Shaw's "Heartbreak House." (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Jeffrey—A comedy, by Paul Rudnick, about love in the age of AIDS. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 420-8000. Closes Jan. 16.)

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat—Like a kaleidoscope, Andrew Lloyd Webber's flippant new mega-version of his first musical is bright, ever-changing, and utterly meaningless. As Joseph, Michael Damian is physically nimble and vocally wan. Everyone else conspires to wring an ovation out of the overstimulated audience. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—A musical, based on the novel by Manuel Puig, with a distinguished book by Terrence McNally and a star performance by the redoubtable Chita Rivera in the title role. Harold Prince was the director. The songs are by John Kander and Fred Ebb. (5/24/93) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Laughter on the 23rd Floor—Neil Simon's twenty-seventh Broadway play, about a group of writers for a fictionalized version of "Your Show of Shows," is one of his finest comic efforts. The subject allows Simon to do what he does best—tell jokes about the making of laughs. Directed by Jerry Zaks, with Mark Linn-Baker, Lewis J. Stadlen, Nathan Lane, Ron Orbach, John Slattery, and J. K. Simmons. (12/20/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

The Loman Family Picnic—A play by Donald Margulies. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes Jan. 15.)

Music from Down the Hill—Alma Cuervo and Welker White in a play by John Ford Noonan. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

My Fair Lady—There's no point in comparing Richard Chamberlain and Melissa Errico, the leads in this Lerner and Loewe revival, with the show's brilliant original stars, Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews. Best to enjoy the score's many gems; the spirited contributions of Paxton Whitehead and Julian Holloway, as Pickering and Alfred P. Doolittle; and the admirable attempts of the director, Howard Davies, to dust off the whole enterprise. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players—Presenting "The Pirates of Penzance" Jan. 6-16. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

Repertorio Español—As usual, a number of plays running in repertory, including "El Galán de la Telenovela" ("The Sexy Star of the Soap Opera"), by Diana Raznovitch; "La Cándida Eréndira" ("Innocent Eréndira"), by Gabriel García Márquez; and "Botánica," by Dolores Prida. Simultaneous English translation is available at all performances of "La Cándida Eréndira." (Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850.)

The Rez Sisters—A comedy by Tomson Highway. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 302-6989.)

She Loves Me—The Roundabout's production of the 1963 Bock-Harnick-Masteroff musical. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

Trophies—A play by John Wooten. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2285.)

Twelfth Night—The Pearl Theatre Company presents Shakespeare's comedy. (125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **GUYS AND DOLLS:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **NUNSENSE:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **OLEANNA:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100 (Closes Jan. 16.) . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** 47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE SISTERS ROSENSWEIG:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WHO'S TOMMY:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

The Radio City Christmas Spectacular—The engagement comes to a close on Jan. 8. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. For information about show times and tickets, call 247-4777.)

Big Apple Circus—The little big top decamps on Jan. 9. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. For information about show times and tickets, call 268-0055.)

Steve Love's New York Express—A roller-skating dance troupe performs to "Fly Me to the Moon," "New Jack Swing," "Beauty and the Beast," and other songs. (Walt Whitman Hall, Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn College. 1-718 951-4500. Jan. 9 at 2.)

"Duplex Planet" Radio Hour—In the seventies, David Greenberger began asking nursing-home residents such questions as "What do you need to know to rule the world?" and "Would you stop making sense if someone said you could?" He started a magazine, *Duplex Planet*, based on the amazing, funny, and profound answers that he got. Here at St. Ann's, Greenberger is performing a series of monologues (this is the second of four) from *Duplex Planet*, with musical interludes by keyboardist Terry Adams. (St. Ann's Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn. 1-718 858-2424. Jan. 9 at 7.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Jan. 5 at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "The Cage," "Other Dances," and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Jan. 6 at 8: "Liebeslieder Walzer" and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Jan. 7 at 8: "Sonatas and Interludes," "Symphony in Three Movements," "Variations pour une Porte et un Soupir," and "Jazz (Six Syncopated Movements)." . . . ¶ Jan. 8 at 2: "Mercury," "Variations pour une Porte et un Soupir," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Jan. 8 at 8: "Concerto Barocco," "Liebeslieder Walzer," and "Symphony in Three Movements." . . . ¶ Jan. 9 at 1: "Ballo della Regina," "The Cage," "Other Dances," and "Bourrée Fantasque." . . . ¶ Jan. 9 at 7: "Haieff Divertimento," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "Barber Violin Concerto," and "Jazz (Six Syncopated Movements)." . . . ¶ Jan. 11 at 8: "Mercury," "Barber Violin Concerto," and "Bourrée Fantasque." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 27.)

"Altogether Different"—A series featuring seven contemporary-dance companies, all of whom will present new works. Jan. 5 at 8 and Jan. 9 at 2 and 7:30: Ann Carlson. . . . ¶ Jan. 6-7 at 8: Doug Elkins Dance Company. . . . ¶ Jan. 8 at 8: Doug Varone and Dancers. . . . ¶ Jan. 11 at 8: Randy Warshaw Dance Company. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through Jan. 23.)

Clara Gibson Maxwell—In the New York première of "Buried Oak." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Jan. 6-8 at 8 and Jan. 9 at 3.)

"Urban Artworks"—A series featuring works by ten local dance companies and independent choreographers, among them Douglas Dunn & Dancers, She-Bops and Scats, Mary Bruce Blackburn and the American Dance Ensemble, and Ming-Lung Yang. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Jan. 6-8 at 8 and Jan. 9 at 3.)

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BOTTEGA VENETA

NIGHT LIFE

Comfort Level

GENERALLY, a New York after-hours establishment gets hot when celebrities begin visiting on a regular basis. Even better than the hot clubs are places that might be called *warm*, where the hip and famous can publicly indulge in the sort of relaxed, levelling behavior that they might indulge in at home or in their hotel suites.

Since Café Sin-é opened on St. Marks Place, in 1990, Bono has been sighted playing the piano, actor Gabriel Byrne has read poetry, and Sinéad O'Connor has washed dishes. It's no coincidence that these stars are Irish: so are the club's owner, Shane Doyle, and its manager, Karl Geary; and so, decidedly, is its cozy, unpretentious charm. An ex-Dubliner who's been living in the States for ten years, Doyle claims he started Sin-é "as a social arena for myself as well as a business. It's my own sanctuary, really."

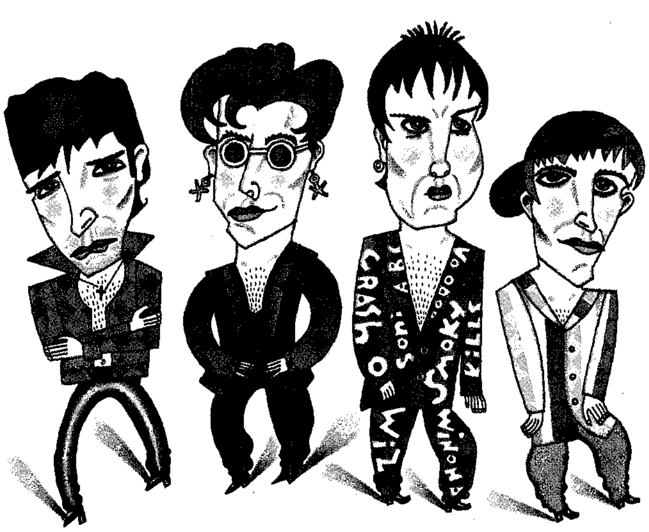
This East Village coffee bar is about as small as they come, with no stage and no sound system to speak of. It's hardly the sort of place where you would expect people like Marianne Faithfull and P. J. Harvey to offer impromptu concerts. Doyle admits it's unfortunate that he can't accommodate bigger audiences for these artists or for the aspiring folk and rock acts that appear regularly at Sin-é (not to mention the writers and poets who give readings two doors away at Anseo, another tiny space overseen by Doyle and Geary). But keeping things small and simple also means keeping them cheap. There's no cover charge or minimum at Sin-é, and the performers all work for free. Consequently, Doyle says, "the spontaneity we cultivated from the beginning still exists. Besides, I couldn't pay these artists what they're worth."

CONCERTS

JUDY KAYE—Ms. Kaye covers as many bases as a home-run hitter. Though she flirts with cabaret and strays as far classical as opera, the soprano's comfort zone resides principally in light musical theatre with a good pedigree (by the likes of Victor Herbert, Jerome Kern, Alan Jay Lerner, Leonard Bernstein, and Stephen Sondheim). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Jan. 8 at 7.)

DURAN DURAN—"Granted, the albums aren't total rubbish. . . ." In damning Duran Duran with the faintest possible praise, the 1992 edition of "The *Rolling Stone* Album Guide" may have rushed to judgment, as the rehabilitation of this British pop quartet from the darkest New Romantic days of the early eighties continues apace. The most recent development was the band's appearance last month on MTV's "Unplugged," in which lead singer Simon Le Bon convincingly emoted in a synthesizer-free setting and the combo reminded everyone that the smooth, ingenious, well-crafted songs on the 1993 comeback album "Duran Duran" are nobody's idea of a joke. With James. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Jan. 11-13 at 8.)

"DANS/MUSIC"—A new series offered by the Danspace Project at St. Mark's; it opens with the group Ancient Vibrations, who will explore the roots of reggae. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Jan. 8 at 8:30. For reservations, call 674-8194.)



Duran Duran at Radio City Music Hall.

WORLD MUSIC INSITUTE—Presenting two concerts at Washington Square Church. Jan. 7: Mbira music of Zimbabwe, with Ephat Mujuru. . . . ¶ Jan 8: Sephardic songs, by the Elias Ladino Ensemble. (135 W. 4th St. Performances at 8. Tickets at the door on the nights of the concerts.)

ROCK AND FOLK

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A great black loft that's jammed with row after row of tables—it looks a little like the site of a standardized test. **BUSTER POINDEXTER AND HIS BANSHEES OF BLUE** stop by on Jan. 7. Poindexter is, of course, the hipster alter ego of David Johansen, that glam-rock icon of yore. His shows here with the Banshees are always crowd-pleasers. On Jan. 8: **JIMMY WEBB AND THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL BAND.** As a tunesmith, Webb has produced some of the most sublime ear candy in contemporary pop music. His songs, several of them standards, have been covered by artists ranging from Glen Campbell to Judy Collins to Richard Harris ("MacArthur Park," later covered by both Waylon Jennings and Donna Summer). Webb's singing has never been as compelling as his writing, but it is always fascinating to hear songs like "Wichita Lineman" and "The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress" delivered by the man who wrote them.

CAFÉ SIN-É, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—On Jan. 5: **PAULA COLE,** whose delicately commanding voice is the perfect vehicle for her urgent, lyrical songs. Another potent singer-songwriter, **RUTH GERSON,** appears Jan. 7-8. On Jan. 11, catch **DRINK ME,** an eclectic, eccentric little outfit that merges folk, jazz, rock, and country, using instruments ranging from a kazoo to a Fanta bottle.

CORNELIA STREET CAFÉ, 29 Cornelia St. (989-9319)—In the basement of this tucked-away Village restaurant-bar is a narrow, white-brick-walled room, decorated with a few tables and steampipes, where you'll find music, poetry readings, and theatre of the cramped. The restaurant itself is a wine-and-candle-light neighborhood café.

GRAND, 76 E. 13th St. (777-0600)—A cross between an old-fashioned split-level night club and a parking garage decorated for a senior prom. Despite the balloons and the candy-colored lights, this is a serious room for serious rock-and-rolling. You can either vibrate up front, near a wall-o'-speakers, or lounge around the bar in the back and follow the show on a video monitor. **LOVE JONES** appears on Jan. 7, with **FUNKFACE, AGENT 99,** and **SCOOBY GROOVE.**

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. The **HATTERS** play on Jan. 8, with guests the **AUTHORITY** . . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday night, at the Continental Club. The dancers all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. On Jan. 9, the **ROY GERSON** orchestra will perform. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

LUDLOW STREET CAFÉ, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—Up until a few years ago, this stretch of the Lower East Side was only for the bold. But now that the artists have moved in, you have to go to Williamsburg if you want to get any more bohemian. The Ludlow Street Café, which was one of the first places to stake a claim on the new frontier, is an unassuming basement restaurant-bar, where you can eat cheap, drink cheap, and catch live music nightly. Mondays belong to **BEAT RODEO,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—Many of the bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. The **HEALTH & HAPPINESS SHOW** rolls in on Jan. 7, with guests Freakwater. The brainchild of singer/multi-instrumentalist James Mastro, formerly of the Bongos, and drummer St. Vincent DeNunzio, an ex-Feelie, H. & H. is currently promoting its début album, "Tonic," which features buoyant neo-country with a folkie edge.

NEW MUSIC CAFÉ, 380 Canal St. (941-0900)—Situated at the crossroads of New Jersey, Brooklyn, and SoHo—an excellent place to get hit by a truck—this restaurant-bar is likely to contain visitors from all three. It's a big, high-ceilinged, broad-windowed place, where the conversations tend to be boisterous and the bands even more so.

PADDY REILLY'S MUSIC BAR, 495 Second Ave., at 28th St. (686-1210)—This Irish outpost has become known as the birthplace of the roots-and-rebellion rock band Black 47, which acknowledged its paternity by putting a picture of the joint on the cover of its new album, "Fire of Freedom." Prepare for a packed room, flowing Guinness, and an Irish-hootenanny atmosphere. **BLACK 47** usually plays on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights. When there's no live music, the jukebox blasts everything from the Chieftains to Greg Trooper to Paddy Reilly, the Irish folksinger who owns the place.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to such things as calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. **TABOU COMBO** comes in on Jan. 7, and Jan. 8 belongs to **BRAZILIAN ENERGY.** Closed Sundays. Dining.

SUPPER CLUB, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—On Thursdays, in the main room, there's a club called Giant Step: the proprietors arrange blind dates between jazz and rap. As d.j.s spin records, a loose collective of musicians and vocalists take turns improvising. You never know who might show up, but Roy Hargrove, Branford Marsalis, and the members of Digable Planets are a few of the artists who have passed through. For Giant Step schedule information, call 714-8001. On Fridays, you'll find "House of la Cage," which brings together Judy, Liza, Marilyn, and Bette in a sequinned, feathered homage to the greatest divas of our time. There's a particularly impressive Cher medley, and Diana Ross is represented both solo and with the Supremes. These guys can lip-synch with the best of them.

THREAD WAXING SPACE, 476 Broadway (966-9520)—

A sometime gallery space with an ahead-of-the-curve booking policy. Jan. 8: Chicago's Drag City record-label party with **ROYAL TRUX, THE RED CRAYOLA,** and **PALACE BROTHERS.**

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—With psychedelic graffiti adorning the walls and peace-espousing, environmentally correct literature displayed near the door, it's little wonder that this cavernous dive (situated right down the block from the entrance to the Holland Tunnel) has lured Deadheads and bands that share the Dead's penchant for endless jamming. That said, patrons in suits and ties can also be spotted swigging beer at the bar and taking in the various incarnations of rock, R. & B., and jazz featured on the small stage toward the back of the club. The **HEALTH & HAPPINESS SHOW** stops by on Jan. 5 (see Maxwell's), with the delightfully freewheeling jazz-pop outfit **TINY LIGHTS.** On Jan. 8: the **ZEN TRICKSTERS,** who mix trippy rock originals with trippy rock covers, and the **SPEED OF LIGHT SHOW.**

STANDARDS AND CABARET

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**WESLIA WHITFIELD** is currently at work in the woody nook known as the Oak Room. She is probably the most assured and affecting jazz-cabaret voice to grace New York in years. With Mike Greensill on piano. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool green music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. The Ballroom is also a tapas restaurant—if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. The Brazilian festival continues with **RAQUEL LIMA, NANDO GABRIELI,** and **PÉ-DE-BOI,** who will be here through Jan. 8.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, beginning an engagement this week, the **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET.** For the past year or so drummer Mickey Roker, a longtime Dizzy Gillespie compatriot, has been bravely and gamely assuming the nearly impossible task of replacing Connie Kay after Kay's thirty-five years with the quartet. The outfit itself remains incomparable, swinging as forcefully, in its own subdued fashion, as the Basie band did in its prime . . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **KURT WIETING** is back on piano.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled-loafers set. The dark, sombre bar (carved-wood lions, iron grillwork) looks like a place you'd find in London's financial district; the dining room (putting-green green carpet, lime-green leather banquettes) has more of a country-club feel. Woody Allen continues his night job as clarinet player in the **NEW ORLEANS FUNERAL AND RAGTIME ORCHESTRA,** a Dixieland-jazz ensemble now in its twentieth year. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—Not to be confused with its richer cousin, the Rainbow Room, which is just down the hall. There you'll find expansive Art Deco glitter; here intimate nineties glitter. **"THE LEONARD BERNSTEIN REVUE: A HELLUVA TOWN!"** continues, featuring timeless songs and a stellar cast of Broadway alumni—Marilyn Caskey, Lauren Mitchell, J. Mark McVey, Patrick Quinn, and Ruth Williamson. Closed Mondays.

RECORD STORE ARRIVALS

A highly selective list of recent and imminent releases we're curious to hear.

"FARAWAY, SO CLOSE" (SBK).
"GERSHWIN PLAYS GERSHWIN/THE PIANO ROLLS" (Elektra Nonesuch).
CROWDED HOUSE, "Together Alone" (Capitol).
"SONGS OF THE WEST" (Rhino).
"TOUGHER THAN TOUGH: THE STORY OF JAMAICAN MUSIC" (Island).

JAZZ AND BLUES

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a sort of well ringed by the bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the patrons. Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and John Parker, Fridays to the George Stubbs trio and the Freddy Francis trio (also here on Saturdays), and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—This northern restaurant-bar, an airy two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery, is a shade too slick for Columbia students but just right for post-collegiate jazz fans. The name is taken from the long-gone midtown pleasure dome that featured Bird himself. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. The **GATO BARBIERI** quintet continues through Jan. 9. On Jan. 10, drummer **KLAUS SUONSAARI** arrives with his band. Suonsaari, who's also a composer, may not have name recognition, but he sure knows how to put together a fabulous band. The encyclopedic tenorist **LEW TABACKIN** and the inventive pianist **RENEE ROSNES** make up a solid core, but the rarely seen Danish bassist **NIELS-HENNING ØRSTED PEDERSON** is the real treat. With his deeply melodious style and terrifying virtuosity, N.H.O.P., as he is known, remains the finest bass player that the European jazz community has yet produced. Beginning Jan. 11: the **DON GROLNICK ALL-STARS,** with **MICHAEL BRECKER, DAVE VALENTIN,** and **MIKE MAINIERI.** Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—On any given night, and well into the morning, one or another of New York's many formidable pianists can be found here, shoehorned into a corner with the resplendent Baldwin that Paul Desmond bequeathed to the late Bradley Cunningham. The **CHICO FREEMAN** trio performs through Jan. 9. Freeman, a multi-instrumentalist who concentrates on tenor sax, is making a very graceful transition from youthful avant-gardist to middle-aged classicist. Now in complete command of his horn, Freeman has the freedom to move in whatever direction he pleases. **FREDDY COLE** (Nat's brother) begins an engagement with his trio on Jan. 10. Dining.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—The seating arrangement in this long, narrow, red-velvet-and-mirror-walled basement makes flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots. But watch your head. **LYNNE ARIALE** continues through Jan. 9, with **JEANNIE BRYSON.** Starting Jan. 11: the **REBECCA COUPE FRANKS** quartet. Franks plays the kind of assertive I-blow-therefore-I-am trumpet that hard-bop avatar Lee Morgan would have approved of. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situated in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for free-thinking musicians. On Jan. 7-8, **DEFUNKT** pays homage to Muddy Waters and Jimi Hendrix.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—The neon beer signs, Manny's caps, and funky drinks lend this blues bar a frat-house aura, but don't let that put you off: the long, dark, brick-walled room is a good spot to catch blues artists both major and minor. **JOHNNY AND THE HEADHUNTERS** arrive on Jan. 7, followed by **CLARENCE SPADY AND THE BLUES STREET ALL-STARS** on Jan. 8 and **GROOVALAYA** on Jan. 11.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Society jazz band; Tuesdays to Jim Lawyer and his Bluebird Society Orchestra; Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band; Fridays to Lew Anderson's big band and Sam Ulano and his Bourbon

Buzzwords

Smooth Macallan

Exhaustive research, recently undertaken, suggested to the Directors of The Macallan that smooth and 'mature' might well be *buzzwords* to be aptly used in any future advertising for our succulent malt whisky.

Ever anxious to explore the latest 'trends,' our Publicity Advisers have *buckled to*.

If such innovation can prompt you to a little in-depth research of your own — a dabble, for instance, in the luscious golden profundities of The Macallan itself — our flirtation with modernism will not have been in vain.

Mature Macallan

**THE MACALLAN.
THE SINGLE MALT
SCOTCH.**

Sole U.S.A. Distributor, Remy Amerique, Inc., NY, NY Scotch Whisky 86 Proof, 43% Alc./Vol.© 1993

Street Swingers; and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and his Stompers.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—The **NAT ADDERLEY** quartet holds court through Jan. 9. With a lot of help from altoist **VINCENT HERRING** and a frisky rhythm team, cornettist Adderley keeps the spirit of his brother Cannonball alive. Beginning Jan. 11: **MC COY TYNER,** with **AVERY SHARPE** and **AARON SCOTT.** There's something so *large* about Tyner's piano playing—his thunderstruck chords, dual cross-rhythms that miraculously find each other, and Tatumesque dashes all seem noble. Sharpe (on bass) and Scott (on drums) round out the trio. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter **MILES EVANS** is in action on Mondays. Dining.

TIME CAFÉ, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Hidden inside this trendy restaurant is a two-story club called Fez. Upstairs is a sumptuous Moroccan bar and lounge appointed with satin couches, mosaic tables, and Arabian-style fixtures. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain in comparison, but still a sleek and comfortable spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. The fourteen-piece ensemble, directed by baritone saxophonist Ronnie Cuber and tenor saxophonist Craig Handy, concentrates exclusively on the tricky, cacophonous work of its catalyst, the late Charles Mingus. Dining.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks, feels, and smells like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. Through Jan. 9: the **TOMMY FLANAGAN** trio, featuring **PETER WASHINGTON** and **WINARD HARPER.** The magnitude of Flanagan's piano playing doesn't announce itself; his refined, lyrical brilliance sneaks up on you. His repertoire is offbeat and ingenious, and his conception of the piano trio is orchestral (though he can swing harder than anyone). Alto-sax player **ARTHUR BLYTHE** and his quartet begin on Jan 11. Blythe may yet become the jazz superstar he's been threatening to turn into for the last twenty years; a midlife burst of passion, à la Joe Henderson, wouldn't hurt. Blythe still sounds like no one else, linking nervy notes with a keening tone and punctiliously ordered improvisations. He's appearing with percussionist **ARTO TUNCBOYACIYAN.** The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

VISIONES, 125 Macdougal St., at 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multicultural flavor. Trumpeter **MARVIN STAMM** leads a quintet on Jan. 5-6.

RADIO WEST 43RD STREET

A list of 1993 albums we'll still be listening to in 1994 and beyond.

GRANT LEE BUFFALO, "Fuzzy" (Slash).
TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY, "Symphony or Damn" (Columbia).
U2, "Zooropa" (Island).
WILLIE NELSON, "Across the Borderline" (Columbia).
TONY TONI TONÉ, "Sons of Soul" (Mercury).
PATTI SCIALFA, "Rumble Doll" (Columbia).
AMERICAN MUSIC CLUB, "Mercury" (Reprise).
DE LA SOUL, "Buhloone Mindstate" (Tommy Boy).
PAUL WESTERBERG, "14 Songs" (Sire).
DANIEL LANOIS, "For the Beauty of Wynona" (Warner Brothers).
EMMYLOU HARRIS, "Cowgirl's Prayer" (Asylum).
JANET JACKSON, "janet." (Virgin).
PEARL JAM, "Vs." (Epic).
PET SHOP BOYS, "Very" (EMI).
CRACKER, "Kerosene Hat" (Virgin).
SALT-N-PEPA, "Very Necessary" (Next Plateau/London).
JOHN MELLENCAMP, "Human Wheels" (Mercury).
SUEDE (Columbia).
NEW ORDER, "Republic" (Qwest).

ART

In My Rooms

THE art of the installation, which usually involves the wholesale takeover of a white cube of a gallery by an untidy assemblage of photos, sculptures, found objects, and other motley elements, is enjoying extraordinary popularity these days, although it's the most difficult kind of show to pull off with any semblance of aesthetic grace or thematic cogency. What a pleasure, then, to discover Karen Kilimnik's show at 303 Gallery (89 Greene Street; through January 29): this beautiful, subtly unnerving set of installations combines a mood of lurking nefariousness with a bedraggled splendor.

In "The Adventure Club," Kilimnik re-creates a room from the Russian ballerina Natalia Makarova's posh apartment, using materials of inspired drabness and a series of portraits of notable adventuresses, "dedicated to the ruination of all men." Emma Peel and Tara King of "The Avengers" are joined by the artist herself, costumed as Elizabeth Taylor in "National Velvet," with purple-painted eyes. In another gallery, Kilimnik has created a sepulchral environment illuminated by scattered votive candles and decorated with elegant pastels bearing titles like "Belgian Duke," "Unknown King," and "Mischief Night." The titles indicate the artist's eclectic but unfailingly perverse sense of historical drama; the works are based on, respectively, Baroness Sheri de Borchgrave's ludicrous memoir of luxury and degradation, "A Dangerous Liaison"; Bernini's heroic bust of Louis XIV; and the night before Halloween (the mischief in question is a swag of white toilet paper hung on gates that might lead to a cemetery, a palace, a prison, Heaven, or Hell). Playing on the contrast between the baroque splendor of the Age of Absolutism and the manic-depressive glamour of our own era, Kilimnik evinces a delightfully mordant aesthetic.

MUSEUMS

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Lucian Freud, who is best known for his nudes and his famous grandfather, has often been called the greatest living figurative painter, but "Recent Work," a mini-retrospective of more than fifty portraits, is something of an apotheosis. The nudes, or "naked people" (as Freud calls his models), include the artist's daughters and his friends, but Freud achieves his most spectacular effects in a series of paintings of an enormous Australian performance artist named Leigh Bowery, whose capacious stomach and broad back are rendered in pachydermatous colors. The effect is quixotically beautiful and painterly, transcending physiognomy. (Two additional shows of Freud's work are on view, at the Mathew Marks gallery and the Robert Miller gallery. See the Uptown gallery listings.) . . . ¶ The New Costume Institute celebrates five decades of the work of Diana Vreeland. The show, billboarded with photographs and magazine layouts from her years as fashion editor of *Harper's Bazaar* (1936-62) and editor-in-chief of *Vogue* (1962-71), illustrates Vreeland's canny vision, based on a fascination with nature, art, and the exotic. Costumes on view include an American broadcloth riding habit (circa 1900); an English jacket (1615-20) that resembles a Gobelin tapestry, with encyclopedic botanical imagery, and a pair of 1970 Gypsy-inspired dresses designed by Giorgio di Sant'Angelo. . . . ¶ Eighteenth-century European decorative arts are on display in the Met's newly unveiled Florence Gould galleries: four new permanent exhibition rooms packed with more than two hundred paintings, tapestries, textiles, sculptures, and porcelain and glass pieces. . . . ¶ "The Gold of Meroe" features the jewelry of Queen Amanishakheto of Meroe, an ancient Nubian ruler. The Queen's cache includes more than two hundred pieces of colored glass, semiprecious stones, silver, and, of course, loads of gold. . . . ¶ "Elephant: The Animal and Its Ivory in African Art" includes seventy objects, from elephant masks to intricately carved tusks, representing more than twenty different indigenous cultures. . . . ¶ "Immortals and Sages: Fusuma Paintings from Ryoan-ji and the Lore of China in Japanese Art." (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—The current Miró retrospective celebrates the centennial of the Catalan master with some four hundred paintings, drawings, prints, sculptures, and ceramics. Through Jan. 11. . . . ¶ "Designed for Speed: Three Automobiles by Ferrari," MOMA's first automobile exhibition in more than fifteen years. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—More than a hundred paintings by Pop master Roy Lichtenstein. Through Jan. 16. . . . ¶ Self-portraits by the photographer Robert Mapplethorpe (1946-89). Through Jan. 23. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO, 575 Broadway—Eighty watercolors, made between 1911 and 1941, by Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944). Through Jan. 24. . . . ¶ "Industrial Elegance," a lobby exhibition, salutes design excellence in everyday objects, from ice-cube makers to Frisbees. Through Jan. 23. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday through Saturday evenings until 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—More than a hundred and sixty paintings, sculptures, drawings, and site-specific installations by Mike Kelley, a Los Angeles-based artist who first made his name on the performance-art circuit in the late nineteen-seventies and who has become one of the most widely imitated artists of the past decade. Through Feb. 2. . . . ¶ Photographs by Walker Evans and Dan Graham. . . . ¶ "Betrothals," three important late canvases and related studies by Arshile Gorky (1904-48). Through Jan. 9. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

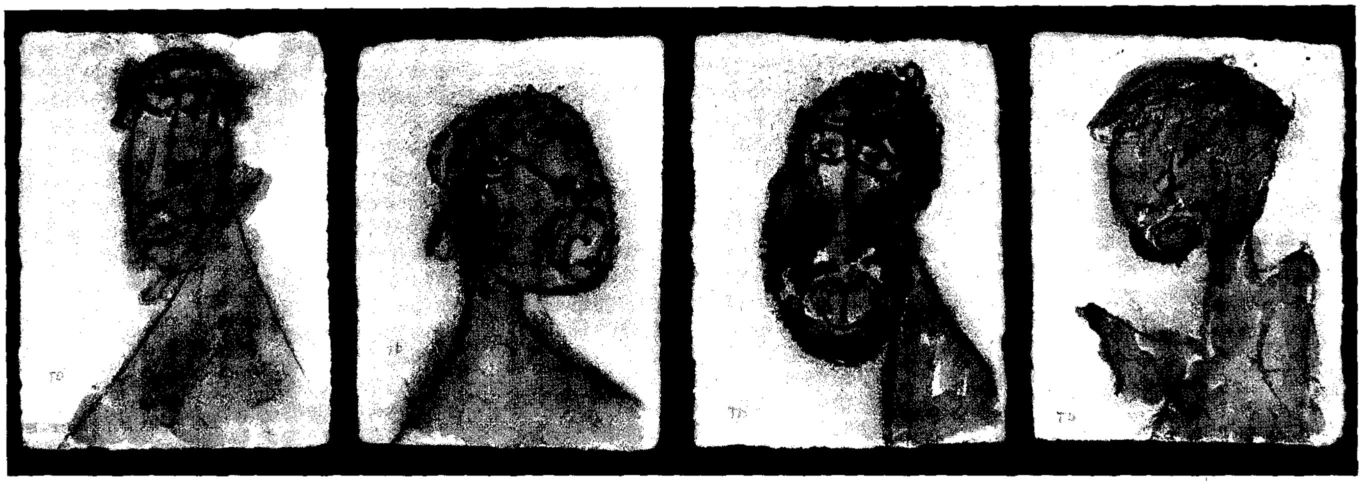
AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Celestial Fender Bender: The Peekskill Meteorite" presents what may be the world's first cosmic car wreck: a 1981 Chevy Malibu and the meteorite that flattened it in Peekskill. Through Jan. 31. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—The handsomely renovated West Wing has been given a stunning inaugural installation of more than five hundred Egyptian objects from the museum's extensive collection, spanning thirteen hundred years of Pharaonic history. The exhibit includes wonderful tiny pieces, like a bright-blue faience monkey with pierced ears, and monumental thanatological displays, like the sarcophagus and mummy of Thothirdes, circa 664-525 B.C. . . . ¶ A thirty-year retrospective of the architect Arata Isozaki features drawings, sketches, prints, and sleek wood scale models. The show starts with Isozaki's City in the Air proposal of the sixties and ends with his master plan to modernize the McKim, Mead & White design of the Brooklyn Museum. Through Feb. 27. . . .¶ Photographs by Consuelo Kanaga (1894-1978). Through Jan. 9. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—"The Ideal Home: 1900-20." (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Fancy Fronts: Men's Waistcoats from the Eighteenth Century." Through Feb. 13. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—"Modern Japanese Ceramics in American Collections." The hundred and twenty pieces displayed here, created by ninety-five artists between 1935 and 1991, represent a wide range of styles, but all employ sophisticated adaptations of traditional Asian techniques. Many avant-garde pieces have a captivating strangeness: a celadon vase by Kawase Shinobu looks like an enormous poached egg, an unforgettably perverse life-size lower leg (foot included) by Matsuda Yuriko is Imari-patterned and looks thoroughly tattooed, and a large bowl with ruffled protrusions ("Shell Appliqué," by Koike Shôko) is decorated with silver, platinum, and gold, and looks like something salvaged from a palace under the sea. Many pieces imitate sombre medieval aesthetics in bold contemporary ways, but others—such as a set of translucent, lotus-petal-ornamented teacups by Tsukamoto Kaiji—are timelessly exquisite. Through Feb. 6. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)



Self-portrait by Thornton Dial (Museum of American Folk Art).

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—The original sixty-six-page manuscript of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," with the author's corrections and revisions, as it appeared before going to press in late November, 1843, will remain on view through Jan. 9. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"Thornton Dial: Image of the Tiger." Dial, who was born in rural Alabama and supported himself for much of his life as a steelworker, doesn't so much paint a canvas as build it up. Paint-can lids, rope, feed sacks, and so on bulge and protrude from his thickly textured works. The tiger in question, sometimes nearly indiscernible, is meant to symbolize the African-American male. The best picture in the show is "Remembering the Road," in which the road appears as a flattened tiger approached by two high-stepping females—"hardheaded girls," according to the artist, who "ain't ashamed" and "ain't afraid." (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"His Honor, the Mayor." Boss Tweed, Jimmy Walker, Fiorello LaGuardia, and Snapple spokesman Ed Koch are among the hundred and six former mayors represented in an exhibition that salutes New York City government (and attempts at government) over the past three hundred and thirty years. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"The Dead Sea Scrolls: Ancient Civilization / Modern Scholarship." Through Jan. 8. (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City—Portraits of Stalin dominate this huge show, called "Stalin's Choice: Soviet Socialist Realism 1932-1956." The many iconic Socialist scenes, engineered to make the U.S.S.R. look like Paradise, include Efanov's epic "Prominent Muscovites in the Kremlin" (1949), billed as "the biggest painting of its time," and Cheptsov's "V. I. Lenin and A. M. Gorki Fishing on Capri in 1908" (1932), in which a stiff-necked Lenin, at sea with some Neapolitan fishermen, gamely dangles a rope in the water. A small selection of works critical of the Communist regime features Komar and Melamid's idea for an electronic signboard over the mausoleum in Red Square. Through Feb. 27. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. The following listings lead off with new shows.)

Lois Dodd / Warren Brandt—Small-scale landscapes focussing on contrasting shades of white in nature. / Still-lifes, in a survey of the artist's forty-year career. Opens Jan. 8. Through Jan. 29. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.)

Robert Jordan (1925-93)—Realistic landscapes of New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Missouri, dating from 1976 to 1993. Opens Jan. 5. Through Jan. 29. (French, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Gaston Lachaise (1882-1935)—Monumental cast-bronze nudes by the French-American sculptor. Opens Jan. 6. Through Feb. 26. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

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George Bellows (1882-1925)—An exhibition of paintings and works on paper by a disciple of Robert Henri, whose Ashcan school of artists spurned the cozy genre scenes favored by some of their contemporaries, preferring urban grit and squalor. "The Jabberwock" (1911) is painted in thick greens and dirty browns; the "Portrait of Elizabeth Alexander" (1924) betrays an absurdist streak: a bland-faced society lady is depicted in a Spanish mantilla, with an inexplicable pouf of blue-green plumage in her lap. The rear gallery contains Bellows' signature boxing scenes. These works on paper are notable both for their craftsmanship and for a frisson of last-gasp Victorian homoerotic prurience, as muscular near-naked men engage in socially sanctioned fisticuffs for the pleasure of a paying audience. Through Jan. 15. (Berry-Hill, 11 E. 70th St. Open Mondays.)

John McLaughlin (1898-1976)—A show of paintings and works on paper by an artist better known to the cognoscenti than to the general public. The earliest work here—a brown and black, roughly geometric painting from 1946—is interesting in light of the artist's subsequent development. These paintings are archetypally fifties, recalling the influences both of Mondrian's neoplasticism and of the moderne design we know from movies of the period. McLaughlin's hard-edged abstract style matured in the sixties and seventies, as he adhered to minimalist composition and a restrained use of color. Yet for all its similarities to the work of other artists—Frank Stella, Robert Ryman, and Ellsworth Kelly come to mind—McLaughlin's work remains distinctive. Through Jan. 8. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Richard Baker—Recent still-life paintings. Through Jan. 22. (Washburn, 20 W. 57th.)

Francesco Clemente—"The Black Paintings" (1991-93) are the latest product of the aesthetico-spiritual quest of this art-world mystagogue. Dark and sombre, these lovely paintings ooze intimations of immortality. Sacred fires, floating men and women, and motile pentacles drift quietly through the murky abyss. Through Jan. 8. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

Lucian Freud—Early paintings, drawings, and etchings, among them "The Painter's Room" (1943), "Girl with a Kitten" (1947), and "Hotel Bedroom" (1954). Through Jan. 8. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Recent drawings and etchings. Through Jan. 29. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Gregory Gillespie—A hyperrealist artist whose paintings sometimes verge on trompe-l'oeil. Through Jan. 22. (Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Howard Hodgkin—Hodgkin's new paintings manifest a bird-of-paradise splendor, as if he alone among his peers can still imagine no more exalted a calling than providing the kind of serious pleasure Matisse gave us. Through Jan. 15. (Knoedler, 19 East 70th St.)

Lucio Muñoz / Red Grooms—Landscape-based abstractions, in mixed mediums on wood. / Watercolors based on the artist's travels. Through Jan. 8. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Jacob Lawrence—Lawrence's first New York show in many years includes four new works. Through Jan. 15. (Midtown Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

"African-American Art: Twentieth-Century Masterworks"—Paintings and sculptures from 1910 to 1965, ranging in style from realism to abstraction. Among the artists are Benny Andrews, Elizabeth Catlett, and Norman Lewis. Through Feb. 12. (Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St.)

"New Works"—William Garbe, Jane Kaplowitz, Robert Zakanitch, and others. Through Jan.

ART—Cont'd

29. (McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

"Sardinia: Sacred Art of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries"—Influences that shaped the culture of the Mediterranean island are examined through elaborate multipart altarpieces, called retables, the principal artistic product of the period. Through Jan. 29. (I.B.M., 590 Madison Ave., at 56th St.)

"Symbolism and the Austrian Avant-Garde: Klimt, Schiele and Their Contemporaries"—An exhibition of paintings, sculpture, and works on paper that examines the symbiosis between Franco-Belgian symbolist art and the burgeoning avant-garde of the Vienna Secession. Artists include Odilon Redon, Felicien Rops, and Max Klinger, whose "Dead Mother" (1885) depicts a naked infant at the breast of his shrouded, dematerialized mother, gazing at the viewer with an expression of unsettling tranquillity. Through Jan. 8. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

"The Daniel Gallery (1912-32): A Tribute"—An exhibition honoring Charles Daniel, a champion of American vanguard art from just before the First World War until the Depression. On view are paintings by William Zorach, Alexander Archipenko, and Man Ray. Through Feb. 12. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

DOWNTOWN

Jennifer Bartlett—Steel plates painted with free-flowing patterns of dots in primary colors. Opens Jan. 7. Through Jan. 29. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Tomislav Gotovac—An installation concerned with totalitarian symbols, cinematic icons, and the former Yugoslavia. Opens Jan. 6. Through Jan. 29. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St.)

Ed Kerns—Semi-geometric paintings in luminous earth colors. Opens Jan. 6. Through Jan. 29. (M-13, 72 Greene St.)

Fred Sandback—Austere drawings, plus studies for site-specific installations, by a minimalist sculptor. Opens Jan. 5. Through Feb. 5. (Nolan/Eckman, 560 Broadway.)

Chi Watts—Abstract paintings based on ancient Chinese calligraphy that has been magnified. Opens Jan. 8. Through Jan. 27. (Wickiser, 568 Broadway.)

"Face to Face"—Portrayals of the human face, in a variety of mediums, by six international artists. Opens Jan. 6. Through Feb. 12. (101 Wooster Street Gallery. Open Mondays and Sundays.)

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Jim Shaw—A small but fascinating show of drawings titled "Dreams That Money Can Buy," after a 1944 Surrealist film by Hans Richter. Each drawing pairs a creepy or innocuous image with a neat but skittishly handwritten text. Even a cursory reading reveals that the words have no relation whatsoever to the images. A precisely detailed drawing of two snarling, muzzled greyhounds is paired with this dreamlike sequence: "A young man of indeterminate age, race, and gender is talking to a large African-American woman about his (?) allergies and troubled family history. . . . He walks backward and compares himself to Jesus and turns into a werewolf." This is no dream—it's Michael Jackson being interviewed by Oprah Winfrey. In fact, all Shaw's dream texts are descriptions of things he's seen on TV—everybody's ready-made unconscious. Through Jan. 15. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Nancy Balliett—Landscape paintings. Through Jan. 22. (Atlantic, 475 Broome St. Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6.)

Colette—An environment focussing on a quasi-Victorian mannequin representing the artist; plus wall hangings. Through Jan. 22. (Gallery Lok, 407 W. 13th St. Wednesdays through Fridays, 1 to 7.)

David Fratkin / Susan Wilmarth-Rabineau—Abstract cityscapes. / Paintings on unstretched linen that have been distressed by tearing or burning. Through Jan. 22. (Painting Center, 52 Greene St.)

Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-88)—Paintings from the mid-eighties. Through Jan. 8. (Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St.)

Carlo (1916-74)—Paintings done by an Italian artist over the course of thirty years, while he was institutionalized for paranoid schizophrenia in a hospital in Verona. Knowing this lends a poignant note to these delightfully captivating works, with their topsy-turvy personal narrative combining figures, animals, and a rigmarole of distorted language. Through Jan. 15. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Gotscho—A sculptural installation of tuxedos, wedding gowns, furniture, and objets de vertu, by a French artist/bodybuilder. Through Jan. 8. (Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St.)

Michael Gregory—Abstractions of rosebushes and a series of octopus paintings, which suggest Byzantine architectural tracery. Through Jan. 19. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Ken Grimes—Black-and-white paintings with imagery and text reflecting the artist's belief in extraterrestrial life. Through Jan. 15. (Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St.)

Clinton Hill—Multicolored geometric wood constructions. Through Jan. 29. (Zarre, 48 Greene St. . . . **note:** A group show, "Thru Thick & Thin," features Doug Ohlson, Marjorie Strider, and Dan Wofford.)

Anish Kapoor—Five new sculptures by a prominent British artist of Indian descent. Through Jan. 29. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Norman Lewis (1909-79)—Thirty abstract works on paper, from the forties, fifties, and sixties. Through Jan. 15. (Berman-Daferner, 568 Broadway.)

Matthias Mansen—Large paintings and woodcuts of abstract figures sitting, standing, or reclining, by this German artist. Through Jan. 22. (Prats, 568 Broadway.)

Joan Miró (1893-1983)—Seven bulky, hulking pieces, including "Personnage," which resembles a swollen, abstract bronze Snoopy, in a knockout show called "Monumental Sculpture." Through Jan. 8. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

Ellen Phelan—Phelan is, on the surface, a traditional artist whose most obvious concerns are for verisimilitude, nuance, and technique, but her portraits of dolls are poetic ruminations, elegiac in tone. Her toy subjects—whether Disneyesque, Victorian, or Betty Boopish—seem to float against hazy backgrounds, as if in amber. Through Jan. 8. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Judy Rifka—Multilayered paper constructions with repeated imagery: a bust of Apollo, turtles, the letter "A." Through Jan. 29. (Information, 41 E. 9th St. Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 7.)

Ellen Rothenberg—"Partial Index," a sculptural installation relating to the Anne Frank diaries. Through Feb. 19. (Kent, 67 Prince St. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.)

Robert Ryman / Dan Flavin—Small, square oil-on-construction-board paintings that afford the viewer an intimate look at the delicacy of touch for which Ryman is famous. / An installation of fluorescent-light sculptures by Ryman's minimalist contemporary Dan Flavin suffuses the spacious rear galleries with the trembling glow of red, blue, pink, and violet light. It's a quiet show, in keeping with the spirit of the Rymans up front, but it still delivers an optical kick. Through Jan. 22. (Pace, 142 Greene St.)

Cary Smith—Geometric abstractions. Through Jan. 15. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

Viktor IV (1929-86)—A retrospective: original watches and clocks that run counterclockwise and upside down; logbook pages with the artist's observations; and "IKONS," gigantic painted-wood hatch covers from old ships. Through March 4. (The Time Is Always Now, 476 Broome St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

"Old Symbols/New Icons in Russian Contemporary Art"—A show of works in a range of mediums by both well-known (Komar and Melamid) and lesser-known artists. Through Jan. 29. (Levy, 588 Broadway.)

"Poverty Pop"—Work by artists who use found materials. Through Jan. 8. (Exit Art, 548 Broadway.)

"Shape"—Works motivated by the desire to "conceptualize" painting, by Charles Fine, Ron Janowich, Robert Therrien, and others. Through Feb. 9. (Auchincloss, 558 Broadway.)

ANTIQUES

Boss Flea—For nearly thirty years, Manhattan has had its own version of a *marché aux puces,* a Parisian street market with so many secondhand articles that it was said to attract fleas. The popular Twenty-sixth Street Annex Antiques Fair and Flea Market (at Sixth Ave.) is open weekends year-round, and even in the most inclement weather pack rats can be seen gleaning treasures at bargain prices. Now they can pursue their interest indoors, in the comfort of the Garage, which has just opened at 112 West 25th Street. Operated by Alan Boss, who has run the Annex since 1975, the Garage is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 9 to 5 (it's actually still a garage the rest of the week), when a hundred and fifty dealers set up their wares—collectibles, antique taxidermy equipment, novelty telephones, vintage Barbies, etc.—on two brightly lit ramps.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Robert Adams / Désiré Charnay (1828-1915)—A photographic essay called "Los Angeles Spring," which includes work from 1978 through 1983. / Rare vintage prints of an 1863 exploration of Madagascar. Through Jan. 29. (Lowinsky, 578 Broadway.)

Macduff Everton—Panoramic landscape photographs. Through Jan. 8. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

Mario Giacomelli—Portraits and Italian landscapes. Through Jan. 8. (Danziger, 130 Prince St.)

Nan Goldin and David Armstrong—A twenty-year friendship, as seen through fifty images, from Goldin's familiar drag queens and débutantes to Armstrong's lesser-known black-and-white self-portraits and portraits of friends. Through Jan. 29. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Lois Guarino—Photo collages that incorporate hand-coloring and other treatments. Through Jan. 15. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St.)

Karl Lagerfeld—A photographic series inspired by the 1919 silent film "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." Through Jan. 16. (Freire, 130 Prince St.)

Charles A. Platt (1861-1933)—More than eighty vintage photographs of Italian gardens. (Paine Webber Gallery, 1285 Sixth Ave., at 52nd St.)

Joseph Sudek (1896-1976)—Pigment prints and advertising images from the twenties through the fifties, by this Czech-born photographer. Through Jan. 8. (Sander, 19 E. 76th St.)

Francesca Woodman—Nudes posed beside decaying materials, such as flaking paint or peeling wallpaper. Through Jan. 15. (Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

"Phil Stern's Hollywood"—Candid shots from the forties through the late seventies by a photographer whose long career included stints with *Life, Esquire,* and the *Saturday Evening Post.* Through Jan. 15. (Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway.)

"Points of View: New York City in the Nineteen-Thirties"—Photographs by Berenice Abbott, Alexander Alland, and Arnold Eagle. Through Jan. 15. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St.)

"Urban Visions"—New York, Paris, London, and other great cities, captured by Brassaï, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, and other great photographers. Through Jan 15. (Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—More than a hundred images by Robert Smithson (1938-73). (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"Iterations: The New Image," an exhibition of computer-generated photography. Through Feb. 6. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Brooklyn Museum.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

The White House Sound

The composer Joan Tower: a première at the New York Philharmonic.

BESIDES being an icon of masculine bravado, Theodore Roosevelt was the first United States President to influence the nation's musical tastes from the bully pulpit of the White House, which he occupied from 1901 through 1909. He and his wife, Edith, instigated musicales in the East Room, where, in 1902, Paderewski became the first keyboard superstar to play a White House piano recital. A year later, Steinway & Sons donated an ornate concert grand, decorated in gold leaf with the seals of the thirteen original states. It dominated the room until the Administration of Teddy's fifth cousin Franklin. The press trumpeted the triumphs of the Roosevelts' East Room performers: pianists Ferruccio Busoni, Josef Hofmann, and Fannie Bloomfield Zeisler; contralto Ernestine Schumann-Heink, in all her personal and vocal amplitude; cellist Pablo Casals, perhaps helping repair Teddy's rough-riding reputation among the Spaniards; early-music pioneer Arnold Dolmetsch, playing a clavichord he'd built himself; and such prominent American composers as John Alden Carpenter, George Chadwick, Arthur Foote, and Amy Cheney Beach.

A replica of the Manhattan brownstone where Roosevelt was born (at 28 East 20th Street), maintained by the National Park Service, is frequently pressed into service as a recital venue. On January 6, pianist Francis Heilbut (the historical site's concert impresario) will mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of Roosevelt's death by playing two "Funeral March" sonatas (Beethoven's Op. 26 and Chopin's Op. 35), Chopin's "Heroic" Polonaise in A-Flat (which figured on Paderewski's first White House program), and the "Woodland Sketches" by Edward MacDowell, whose works were particularly championed in the Roosevelts' East Room.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for the Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse at Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St., 772-4448.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA,** with Ruth Ann Swenson, Frank Lopardo, Thomas Hampson, Enzo Dara, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; conducted by Carlo Rizzi. (Jan. 5 at 8.) . . . **ELEKTRA,** with Hildegard Behrens, Deborah Voigt, Brigitte Fassbaender, James King, and Robert Hale; James Levine. (Jan. 6 and Jan. 11 at 8.) . . . **I LOMBARDI,** by Verdi, with Aprile Millo, Luciano Pavarotti, Bruno Beccaria, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. (Jan. 7 at 8.) . . . **MADAMA BUTTERFLY,** with Diana Soviero, Yun Deng, Richard Leech, and Thomas Allen; Thomas Fulton. (Jan. 8 at 1:30.) . . . **LES TROYENS,** by Berlioz, with Françoise Pollet, Maria Ewing, Paul Frey, Dwayne Croft, and Paul Plishka; James Levine. (Jan. 8 at 6:30.) . . . **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR,** with Mariella Devia, Jerry Hadley, Juan Pons, and Dimitri Kavrakos; Nello Santi. (Jan. 10 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

Amato Opera Company—Final performances of "Die Fledermaus," in English. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Jan. 7-8 at 7:30 and Jan. 9 at 2:30.)

Bronx Opera—Presenting "Un Giorno di Regno," Verdi's second opera, and his only comic one until "Falstaff," written fifty-three years later. Fully staged, and sung in English. (Lehman Center Theatre, Bedford Park Blvd., near Jerome Ave., the Bronx. Jan. 8 at 8 and Jan. 9 at 2. For information about tickets, call 408-1661. Through Jan. 15.)

ORCHESTRAS

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Leonard Slatkin conducting. Jan. 5 at 6:45: An hour-long concert of Respighi's third suite of "Ancient Airs' and Dances" and Stravinsky's "Le Sacre du Printemps." . . . ¶ Jan. 6 and Jan. 8 at 8, and Jan. 7 at 11 A.M.: Though Joan Tower's catalogue of compositions isn't voluminous, it's of a high enough quality to have earned her the Grawemeyer Award, roughly the equivalent of a Nobel Prize for composers. She has described herself as a "choreographer of sound," manipulating blocks of musical material to create an overtly spatial impression, much as a choreographer moves dancers to underscore their spatial relationships on a stage. Tower's half-hour-long "Concerto for Orchestra" (her largest work to date) receives its New York première in this concert, which also includes Berlioz' "Benvenuto Cellini" Overture and Stravinsky's "Le Sacre du Printemps." . . . **NOTE:** Ms. Tower will participate in pre-concert interviews, open to ticket holders, on Jan. 6 at 7 and Jan. 7 at 10 A.M.

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Robert Craft conducts the group (scaled down to chamber-orchestra proportions) in Mozart's Symphony No. 29 and two Stravinsky works from the sixties: "Abraham and Isaac" and "Monumentum pro Gesualdo." Classical guitarist David Starobin performs Elliott Carter's "Changes," and an ensemble of noted freelancers convenes for Schoenberg's "Serenade" (Op. 24, featuring baritone David Wilson-Johnson). (Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse. Jan. 8 at 8.)

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra—David Zinman conducts Michael Daugherty's "Metropolis Symphony," Ravel's D-Major Piano Concerto (for the left hand; featuring Leon Fleisher), and Rachmaninoff's "Symphonic Dances." (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 9 at 3.)

Juilliard Orchestra—Otto-Werner Mueller conducts Beethoven's "Coriolan" Overture and Symphony No. 8 as well as Schumann's Cello Concerto (featuring Ilya Finkelshteyn). (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Jan. 11 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are necessary, call 769-7406.)

RECITALS

David Shifrin and the Next Generation—The clarinettist is joined by several young artists to perform works by Mozart (including his C-Minor Wind Serenade, K. 388) and Poulenc (his Sonata for Two Clarinets). (Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse. Jan. 6 at 12:30. Free tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Tribute to Teddy—Pianist Francis Heilbut observes the seventy-fifth anniversary of the death of Theodore Roosevelt by performing two "Funeral March" sonatas—Beethoven's Twelfth, Op. 26, and Chopin's Second, Op. 35—as well as MacDowell's "Woodland Sketches" and Chopin's A-Flat Polonaise (Op. 53). A benefit concert. (Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace, 28 E. 20th St. Jan. 6 at 6:30. For information about tickets, call 866-2086.)

Bargemusic—Beethoven for one, two, and three players. Pianist Edward Auer performs the F-Major Sonata (Op. 10, No. 2), violinist Ik-Hwan Bae joins him for the G-Major Violin Sonata (Op. 96), and cellist Fred Sherry completes the ensemble for the E-Flat-Major Piano Trio (Op. 70, No. 2). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Jan. 6 at 7:30 and Jan. 9 at 4.)

Marina Piccinini—Flutist, with pianist William Wolfram, performing sonatas by Mozart and Martinů, as well as works by Debussy, Sofia Gubaidulina, and Michael Colgrass. (Sylvia and Danny Kaye Playhouse. Jan. 7 at 6. Free tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Richard Tauber Memorial—An annual tribute to the late tenor, this year featuring mezzo-soprano Barbara Conrad (with pianist Patricia Sage) singing lieder by Brahms and Wolf, plus "Waltraute's Narrative" from Wagner's "Götterdämmerung"; also, reminiscences by Geoffrey Riggs and pianist Francis Heilbut. (Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace, 28 E. 20th St. Jan. 8 at 2. No charge beyond house admission.)

Benita Valente and Sharon Isbin—The soprano and the classical guitarist perform Spanish songs; Ms. Isbin offers solo-guitar works by Leo Brouwer, Agustín Barrios, and others. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Jan. 8 at 8.)

Barros Classical Consort—The period-instrument piano trio performs trios by Mozart and Beethoven. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. Jan. 9 at 11 A.M. Admission is free, but call 1-718 885-2478 to reserve a seat.) . . . ¶ The ensemble is joined by tenor Robert White and flutist Anne Briggs in a concert that includes trios by Mozart (in B-Flat Major, K. 502), Beethoven (in G Major, Op. 1, No. 3), and Stephen Storace, in addition to a set of Scottish songs (as set by Weber). (Weill Recital Hall. Jan. 11 at 8.)

Bronx Arts Ensemble—Members of the group perform Bloch's "Suite Hébraïque," Tchaikovsky's A-Minor Piano Trio, and the première of William Mayer's "Good King Wenceslas" (in which Robert Sherman will provide the narration). (Russian Mission to the U.N. Residency, Mosholu Ave. at 255th St., the Bronx. Jan. 9 at 2. For information about tickets, call 1-718 601-7399.)

LISTENING BOOTH

Piano Works for the Left Hand: Leon Fleisher (Sony). The generation of American pianists that emerged at mid-century was beset by one tragedy after another. William Kappell perished in a plane crash; Van Cliburn blazed like a meteor and burned out; Gary Graffman and Byron Janis both struggled with debilitating physical problems. Fleisher, impressively combining power and grace from the start, seems to have achieved the most enduring career of the bunch, despite having been deprived of the use of his right hand almost without remission since 1965, due to carpal tunnel syndrome. Many of these thirteen solos were composed by or for pianists laboring under enforced left-handedness. (The disk is the second in a series that started last year with a collection of three left-hand concertos, including the Ravel that Fleisher plays with the Baltimore Symphony on January 9, at Carnegie Hall.) The pinnacle is a magisterial interpretation of Bach's D-Minor Violin Chaconne (arranged by Brahms for Clara Schumann, who was herself suffering from right-arm overexertion at the time). Works by Felix Blumenfeld and Leopold Godowsky display such pyrotechnics that you'd imagine two hands were at work. But that's beside the point, since Fleisher convinces you that great music-making has more to do with the head and the heart than with the hands.

Luciano Pavarotti—The tenor, singing arias and songs; with pianist Leone Magiera. (Metropolitan Opera House. Jan. 9 at 3.)

Brigitte Fassbaender—The mezzo-soprano is joined by pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet in a selection of Wolf's "Mörike Lieder." (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Jan. 9 at 3.)

Brooklyn Friends of Chamber Music—Presenting Mozart's Piano Trio in B-Flat Major (K. 502), the première of Eugene Phillips' Duo for Violin and Viola, and Brahms' A-Major Piano Quartet. (Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, 85 S. Oxford St., Brooklyn. Jan. 9 at 3. For information about tickets, call 1-718 855-3053.)

Music Amici—Presenting chamber music for Anglophiles, by Holst, Bliss, and Elgar. (Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, Madison Ave. at 73rd St. Jan. 9 at 4. Admission by contribution.)

Salon Soirée—Members of the audience will get into the act as artist Ivan Jenson and pianist Ilan Rechtman improvise visual and musical portraits in this upstairs music room. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. Jan. 9 at 6 and 8. Admission is free, but call 876-6000 to reserve a seat.)

Among Violists—The New York Viola Society presents violists Daniel Avshalomov, Karen Dreyfus, Stephanie Fricker, Christine Ims, Tina Pelikan, Veronica Salas, Rozanna Weinberger, Stephen Werczynski, Toby Hoffman, and Hsin-Yun Wung in a wide-ranging recital, following which Emanuel Vardi will lead everyone who wants to play—from among the soloists and members of the audience who've brought along their instruments—in a reading of works for multiple violas. (Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. 580-0210, ext. 28. Jan. 10 at 7:30.)

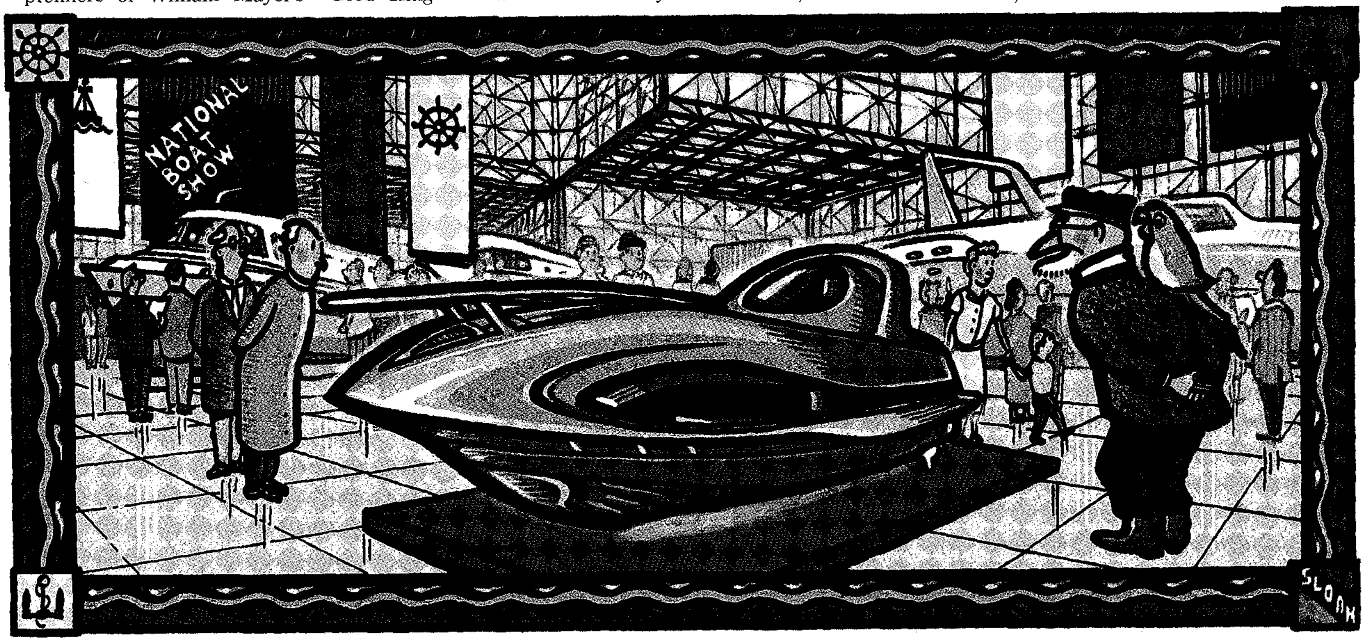
Sylvan Wind Quintet—Performing Piston's "Three Pieces," Rochberg's "To the Dark Wood," Reicha's Quintet in B-Flat (Op. 88, No. 5), and (with the assistance of pianist Jeong Won Hong) Mozart's Quintet for Piano and Winds (K. 452). (Weill Recital Hall. Jan. 10 at 8.)

Parnassus—The contemporary-music ensemble offers Jonathan Harvey's "Tendril" and Andrew Imbrie's "Three Piece Suite," in addition to premières of works by Anthony Korf and Arthur Kreiger. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Jan. 10 at 8.)

Music by Chris DeBlasio—A sampling of the legacy of a composer whose brief career had already blossomed before AIDS brought it to an end last summer. Performers include soprano Faith Esham, mezzo-soprano Mary Ann McCormick, baritone Sanford Sylvan, guitarist Nicholas Goluses, pianist/organist Harry Huff, and the Stonewall Chorale (directed by Nancy Vang). (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Jan. 11 at 8.)

League of Composers / I.S.C.M.—Performing works by Webern (his "Five Movements for String Quartet"), Andrew Mead (his Horn Trio), Kitty Brazelton, David MacBride, and Scott Lindroth. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Jan. 11 at 8.)

Chamber Pot Pourri—Violinist Jaime Laredo and cellist Sharon Robinson play the Handel/Halvorsen Passacaglia; violist Ida Kavafian joins them in Beethoven's String Trio in E-Flat (Op. 3); and pianist Leon Fleisher completes the ensemble for Korngold's Suite for Piano Left Hand and Strings. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Jan. 11-12 at 8.)



MICHAEL SLOAN

New York National Boat Show at the Javits Center.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Ahoy, Mateys!—If dreams of waterborne hardware and balmy weather help you make it through winter, head for the New York National Boat Show. Among the models of futuristic craft, check out the Nautilus 3, which looks like a cross between a spaceship and a submarine. (Jules Verne may have been onto something.) Travelling *back* in time is also a possibility: the antique-boats display features a 1928 twenty-nine-foot Hackercraft triple-cockpit runabout with its original V-6 two-hundred-horsepower engine. (Kind of rolls off the tongue, doesn't it?) Other exhibits include a new fishing hall, along with inflatable rafts, three-dimensional sonars, global-positioning systems, powerboats, yachts, sailboats docked at an indoor pier, and a thirty-five-hundred-gallon aquarium stocked for the indoor angler. Tall tales and fish stories will abound. (Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, Eleventh Ave. between 34th and 39th Sts. Jan. 8, from 10 to 9; Jan. 9, from 11 to 7; and Jan. 10-11, from noon to 8. Tickets at the door on the days of the event. Through Jan. 16.)

Galway and Guest—A reading of the contemporary romantic poetry of Galway Kinnell and the lyrical, abstract verse of Barbara Guest. The poets will include both new and older work. Kinnell's "Selected Poems," published in 1982, won both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize; his most recent collection is "When One Has Lived a Long Time Alone" (1990). Guest, who lives on Long Island, is a novelist and a biographer of the poet H.D. as well as the author of ten books of poetry, the latest of which is "Defensive Rapture." (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. Jan. 11 at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Things Past—The Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, whose most recent book is "In Praise of the Stepmother," will read from his forthcoming memoir. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Jan. 10 at 8.)

EWNY—The New York Art Theatre Institute will present an adaptation of Edith Wharton's novella "Old New York," in the double parlor of the Old Merchant's House Museum, an appropriately venerable 1832 row house suited to the period. With music composed by Henry Threadgill. (29 E. 4th St. Jan. 6-7 at 8, and Jan. 8 at 3 and 8. For tickets, call 226-6211.)

More Readings—Jan. 7 at 7: Anne-christine d'Adesky, Patrick McGrath, Michael O'Keefe, and Sapphire will read from their work. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ Jan. 8 at 8: Fred Dings and Dana Gioia will read from their own poetry. A discussion of Gioia's essay "Can Poetry Matter?" will follow the reading. (Beatrix Books & Pix, 33-18 Broadway, Astoria. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Jan. 11 at 7: Stephen Wright will read from his soon-to-be-published novel, "Going Native." (Limbo, 47 Avenue A, at 4th St. No tickets necessary.)

Talks—Jan. 5 at 8: McGeorge Bundy will discuss nuclear proliferation. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.) . . . ¶ Jan. 10 at 6: Jazz pianist Marcus Roberts will talk about his work as a performer and composer. (Rose Building, Kaplan Penthouse, 165 W. 65th St. 875-5440.) . . . ¶ Jan. 11 at 8:15: Judith Jamison, the artistic director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, will discuss her work with *Village Voice* dance critic Deborah Jowitt. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

Walks & Tours—Jan. 8 at 1: Big Onion Walking Tours will take in immigrant New York. For more information, call 439-1090. . . . ¶ Jan. 9 at 11: A bus tour of Sephardic synagogues in Manhattan and Brooklyn, conducted by the Municipal Art Society. For more information, call 935-3960.

FOR KIDS

(A list of activities for children and their parents or other adults.)

Sesame Street Live—Final performances of "When I Grow Up," a musical stage show with Big Bird, Cookie Monster, Bert and Ernie, et al. (Paramount, Madison Square Garden. Through Jan. 9. For information about show times and tickets, call 465-6000.)

"The True Story of Rumpelstiltskin"—A marionette production of the German folktale. (Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. 988-9093. Tuesdays through Fridays at 10:30 and noon, and Saturdays at noon and 3.)

High Note—Trumpeter Wynton Marsalis and his septet take a look at the blues, in a Jazz for Young People concert. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Jan. 8 at 11 and 1.)

Monkey Business—Theatreworks/USA presents "Curious George," a new musical based on the books by H. A. and Margret Rey. (Promenade Theatre, Broadway at 76th St. 677-5959. Jan. 8 at 12:30 and Jan. 9 at 10:30 and 12:30. Through Jan. 16.)

Heads Up—The Cloisters is hosting a workshop on hats, caps, and turbans. Participants will be given a guided tour of the museum's art collection (with an eye toward headgear, of course); then, they will make some sort of chapeau to take home. Recommended ages: four to eight. (Fort Tryon Park. Jan. 8 at 1. No charge beyond museum admission.)

Broadway Pixie Judy Troupe—In a staged musical adaptation of the 1940 movie "The Thief of Bagdad." (Mazur Theatre, Asphalt Green, 555 E. 90th St. Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. For reservations, call 688-1740.)

SPORTS

CHAMPIONSHIP FOOTBALL

Long Shots—Early last year, when the Giants' management hired head coach Dan Reeves, the former Denver Broncos coach and a man better known for his disciplinary skills than his imagination, to revive a 6-10 team hobbled by injury and internecine warfare, everyone politely applauded—but no one expected much. Who could have predicted that Coach Reeves' Giants would be the first team in the league to clinch a playoff berth, making this the Giants' first postseason appearance in three long years? But no matter how the playoffs turn out, the '93 Giants are in there—a fait accompli that made for a fine Christmas gift. So if the Giants end up getting stuffed by the Cowboys or the 49ers—as they probably will—we can always remember the absurdly poignant sight of Lawrence Taylor sleeping Yoda-like on the bench, a vision of muscle-bound serenity. At press time, the Giants' first-round opponents were still to be determined, but don't be too surprised when Reeves is named Coach of the Year. We peered into our crystal ball to see about the hapless Jets, who were still theoretically alive as we left the office for a long winter's nap, but their remaining schedule looked mighty grim.

HOME TEAMS

Knicks—Vs. the Portland Trail Blazers, Jan. 9. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Clippers, Jan. 11. (Game time, 7:30.)

Nets—Vs. the Milwaukee Bucks, Jan. 5. . . . ¶ Vs. the Washington Bullets, Jan. 11. (Game time, 7:30.)

Rangers—Vs. the Calgary Flames, Jan. 5. . . . ¶ Vs. the Tampa Bay Lightning, Jan. 10. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Calgary Flames, Jan. 7 at 7:40.

Devils—Vs. the Florida Panthers, Jan. 7. . . . ¶ Vs. the Washington Capitals, Jan. 9. (Game time, 7:35.)

(The Giants and the Jets play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands, 1-201 935-8111; the Knicks and the Rangers at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Nets and the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

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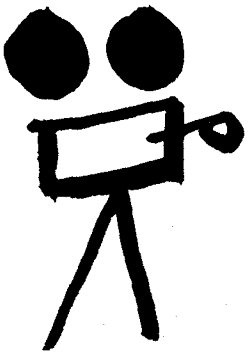

THE MOVIES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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9	10	11				

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 22.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "The Piano" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Piano" (†).
Theatre 3: "Farewell My Concubine" (directed by Chen Kaige, in Mandarin).
Theatre 4: "Faraway, So Close" (Wim Wenders; in German).
Theatre 5: "The Snapper" (Stephen Frears).
Theatre 6: "Naked" (Mike Leigh), with David Thewlis.

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
"Valley of Abraham" (Manoel de Oliveira; in Portuguese).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Mrs. Doubtfire" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Perfect World" (Clint Eastwood).
Theatre 3: "The Saint of Fort Washington" (Tim Hunter), with Matt Dillon and Danny Glover.

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "The Remains of the Day" (James Ivory).
Theatre 2: "Tombstone" (George Cosmatos), with Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer, and Sam Elliott.
Theatre 3: "Addams Family Values" (Barry Sonnenfeld).
Theatre 4: "The Pelican Brief" (†).
Theatre 5: "Geronimo: An American Legend" (†).
Theatre 6: "Grumpy Old Men" (†).
Theatre 7: "The Pelican Brief" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"The Legend of Fong Sai-Yuk" (Corey Yuen Kwai; in Cantonese).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Joy Luck Club" (Wayne Wang).
Theatre 3: "Short Cuts" (Robert Altman).
Theatre 4: "The Summer House" (Waris Hussein), with Joan Plowright, Julie Walters, Jeanne Moreau, and Lena Headey.
Theatre 5: "Batman: Mask of the Phantasm," an animated film; and "Bank Robber" (Nick Mead).
Theatre 6: "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).
Theatre 7: "Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas" (Henry Selick).

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "The Piano" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Perfect World" (Clint Eastwood).
Theatre 3: "What's Eating Gilbert Grape" (Lasse Hallström), with Johnny Depp and Juliette Lewis.
Theatre 4: "Tombstone" (George Cosmatos), with Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer, and Sam Elliott.
Theatre 5: "Wayne's World 2" (†).
Theatre 6: "Grumpy Old Men" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Carlito's Way" (Brian De Palma, with Al Pacino.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Grumpy Old Men" (†).
Theatre 2: "Tombstone" (George Cosmatos), with Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer, and Sam Elliott.
Theatre 3: "Wayne's World 2" (†).
Theatre 4: "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "The Pelican Brief" (†).
Theatre 2: "Geronimo: An American Legend" (†).
Theatre 3: "George Balanchine's The Nutcracker" (†); and "Addams Family Values" (Barry Sonnenfeld).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Beethoven's 2nd" (†).

Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Farewell My Concubine" (Chen Kaige, in Mandarin).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Mrs. Doubtfire" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"My Life" (Bruce Joel Rubin).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Beethoven's 2nd" (†).
Theatre 2: "Wayne's World 2" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Batman: Mask of the Phantasm," an animated film.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Six Degrees of Separation" (†).
Theatre 2: "Grumpy Old Men" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Tombstone" (George Cosmatos), with Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer, and Sam Elliott.
Theatre 2: "Tombstone."
Theatre 3: "Short Cuts" (Robert Altman).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Carlito's Way" (Brian De Palma), with Al Pacino.
Theatre 2: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 3: "Geronimo: An American Legend" (†).
Theatre 4: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 5: "In the Name of the Father" (Jim Sheridan), with Daniel Day-Lewis and Emma Thompson.
Theatre 6: "Wrestling Ernest Hemingway" (Randa Haines), with Robert Duvall and Richard Harris.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "A Perfect World" (Clint Eastwood).
Theatre 2: "Philadelphia" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Shadowlands" (†).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Pelican Brief" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Pelican Brief" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Joy Luck Club" (Wayne Wang).

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"What's Eating Gilbert Grape" (Lasse Hallström), with Johnny Depp.

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Batman: Mask of the Phantasm," an animated film.

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Carlito's Way" (Brian De Palma), with Al Pacino.
Theatre 2: "Mrs. Doubtfire" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "Geronimo: An American Legend" (†).
Theatre 2: "Addams Family Values" (Barry Sonnenfeld); and "A Perfect World" (Clint Eastwood).
Theatre 3: "Wayne's World 2" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Pelican Brief" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Pelican Brief" (†).
Theatre 6: "Beethoven's 2nd" (†).
Theatre 7: "Grumpy Old Men" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).
Theatre 2: "Tombstone" (George Cosmatos), with Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer, and Sam Elliott.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "The Forbidden Quest" (directed by Peter Delpeut).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "The War Room" (D. A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus), a documentary.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Six Degrees of Separation" (†).
Theatre 2: "Wayne's World 2" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Beethoven's 2nd" (†).
Theatre 2: "Carlito's Way" (Brian De Palma), with Al Pacino.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Spike and Mike's Festival of Animation '93.
Theatre 2: "Blue" (†).
Theatre 3: "Blue" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Age of Innocence" (Martin Scorsese).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Carlito's Way" (Brian De Palma), with Al Pacino.
Theatre 2: "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).
Theatre 3: "Beethoven's 2nd" (†).
Theatre 4: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 5: "Schindler's List" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Remains of the Day" (James Ivory).
Theatre 7: "The Pelican Brief" (†).
Theatre 8: "Mrs. Doubtfire" (†).
Theatre 9: "Geronimo: An American Legend" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Batman: Mask of the Phantasm," an animated film.
Theatre 2: "My Life" (Bruce Joel Rubin).
Theatre 3: "Addams Family Values" (Barry Sonnenfeld).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "A Bronx Tale" (Robert De Niro).
Theatre 2: "Short Cuts" (Robert Altman).
Theatre 3: "Fearless" (Peter Weir).
Theatre 4: "Gettysburg" (Ronald F. Maxwell).
Theatre 5: "The Age of Innocence" (Martin Scorsese).
Theatre 6: "The Wedding Banquet" (Ang Lee).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Heaven and Earth" (Oliver Stone), with Tommy Lee Jones, Joan Chen, Haing S. Ngor, and Hiep Thi Le.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"A Dangerous Woman" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas" (Henry Selick); and "The Joy Luck Club" (Wayne Wang).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "The Summer House" (Waris Hussein), with Joan Plowright, Julie Walters, Jeanne Moreau, and Lena Headey.
Theatre 2: "Like Water for Chocolate" (Alfonso Arau; a Mexican film, in Spanish).

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
"The Trial" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"The Remains of the Day" (James Ivory).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Wedding Banquet" (Ang Lee).

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Grumpy Old Men" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Mrs. Doubtfire" (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Farewell My Concubine" (Chen Kaige, in Mandarin).
Theatre 2: "Faraway, So Close" (Wim Wenders; in German).
Theatre 3: "Blue" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Piano" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Snapper" (Stephen Frears).
Theatre 6: "The Accompanist" (Claude Miller; in French).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Schindler's List" (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Wayne's World 2" (†).

Theatre 2: "Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit" (†).
Theatre 3: "Addams Family Values" (Barry Sonnenfeld).
Theatre 4: "A Perfect World" (Clint Eastwood).
Theatre 5: "Geronimo: An American Legend" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Pelican Brief" (†).

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (316-4962)
"Naked" (Mike Leigh), with David Thewlis.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Beethoven's 2nd" (†).
Theatre 2: "Tombstone" (George Cosmatos), with Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer, and Sam Elliott.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Ghost in the Machine" (Rachel Talalay), with Karen Allen and Chris Mulkey.
Theatre 2: "Batman: Mask of the Phantasm," an animated film; and "Carlito's Way" (Brian De Palma).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Ghost in the Machine" (directed by Rachel Talalay), with Karen Allen and Chris Mulkey.
Theatre 2: "Man's Best Friend" (John Lafia).
Theatre 3: "A Perfect World" (Clint Eastwood).
Theatre 4: "Beethoven's 2nd" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Pelican Brief" (†).
Theatre 6: "Carlito's Way" (Brian De Palma).
Theatre 7: "Batman: Mask of the Phantasm," an animated film.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Tombstone" (George Cosmatos), with Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer, and Sam Elliott.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 6: "Wayne's World 2" (†). From Jan. 7: "The Air Up There" (Paul Michael Glaser).
Theatre 2: "Wayne's World 2" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 6: "The Three Musketeers" (Stephen Herek); and "Cool Runnings" (Jon Turteltaub). From Jan. 7: "Cabin Boy" (Adam Resnick).

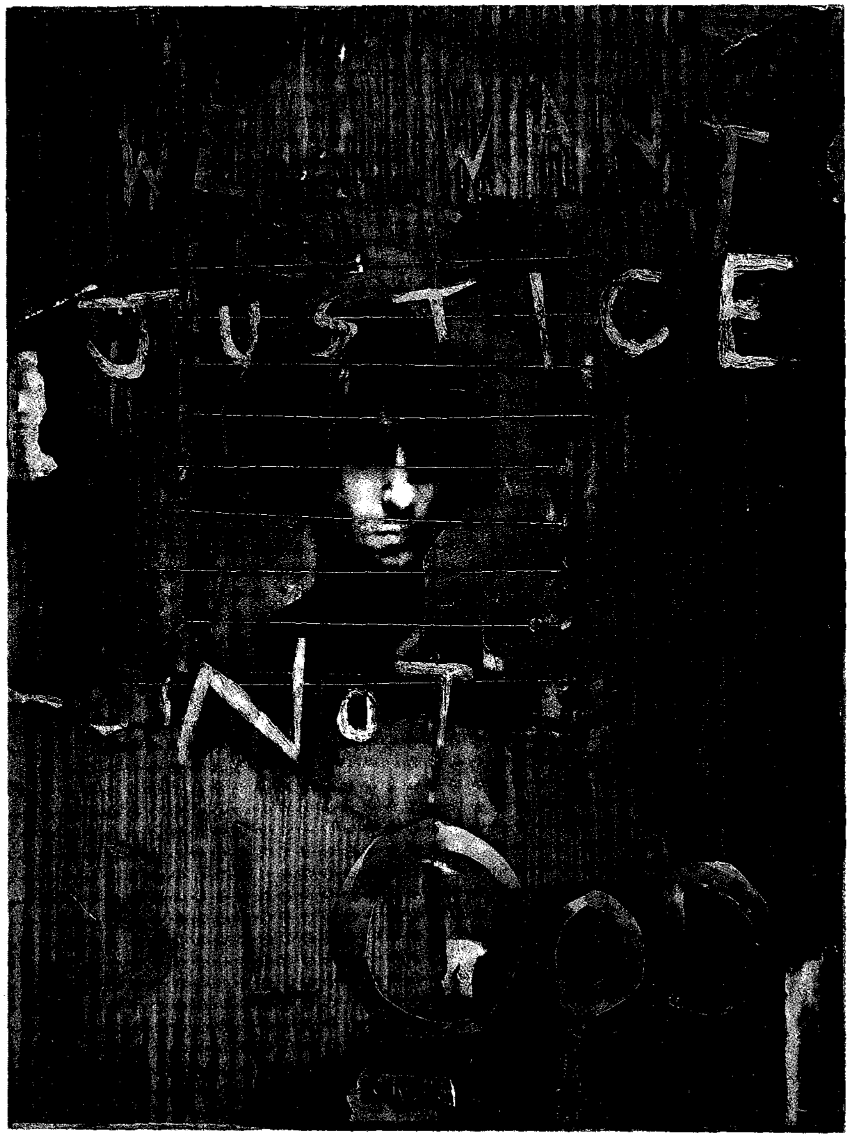
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway. (869-8340)
"Addams Family Values" (Barry Sonnenfeld).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Geronimo: An American Legend" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mrs. Doubtfire" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
"The Red Shoes" (1948, directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger), with Moira Shearer and Léonide Massine.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Jan. 5: "Fanny and Alexander" (1983, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish).
Jan. 6: "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" (1958, Richard Brooks), with Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Newman, and Burl Ives; and "The Night of the Iguana" (1964, John Huston), with Richard Burton, Ava Gardner, and Deborah Kerr.
Jan. 7-8: "Five Easy Pieces" (1970, Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson; and "The King of Marvin Gardens" (1972, Rafelson), with Nicholson.
Jan. 9: "Wuthering Heights" (1939, William Wyler), with Merle Oberon and Laurence Olivier; and "Jane Eyre" (†).
Jan. 10: "Alexander Nevsky" (1938, Sergei Eisenstein; in Russian), with Nikolai Cherkassov; and "Potemkin" (1925, Eisenstein; a Russian silent film).



At the First & 62nd Cinemas, Daniel Day-Lewis in "In the Name of the Father."

Jan. 11: "The Last Detail" (†); and "The Fortune" (1975, Mike Nichols), with Warren Beatty and Jack Nicholson.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Jan. 6 at 2:30: "The Four Days in Naples" (1962, directed by Nanni Loy; in Italian).... ¶ Jan. 6 at 3 and 7: "Both Sides of the Wire" (1993, Neal Livingston) and "My Grandparents Had a Hotel" (1990, Karen Shopsowitz), both documentaries.... ¶ Jan. 6 at 6 and Jan. 10 at 2:30: "O Schiaffo" (1923, Emanuel Rotondo; an Italian silent film).... ¶ Jan. 7 at 2:30: "A Che Servono Questi Quattrini?" (1942, Esodo Pratelli; in Italian).... ¶ Jan. 7 and 10 at 3 and 6: Two programs of short films by Chris Marker.... ¶ Jan. 7 at 6: "Quel Du" (1935, Gennaro Righelli; in Italian).... ¶ Jan. 7 at 8: "Vincenzella" (1923, Goffredo D'Andrea; an Italian silent film).... ¶ Jan. 8-9 at 1:30 and 5 and Jan. 11 at 3: "Owl's Legacy" (1990, Marker), all eleven parts shown in four programs.... ¶ Jan. 8 at 2: "The Gold of Naples" (1957, Vittorio De Sica; in Italian), with Sophia Loren and De Sica.... ¶ Jan. 8 at 5: "Avanti!" (1972, Billy Wilder), with Jack Lemmon and Juliet Miles.... ¶ Jan. 9 at 2 and Jan. 11 at 6: "Totò a Colori" (1952, Stefano Vanzina; in Italian).... ¶ Jan. 9 at 5: "47 Morto che Parla" (1950, Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia; in Italian).... ¶ Jan. 10 at 6: "Città Canora" (1952, Mario Costa; in Italian).... ¶ Jan. 11 at 2:30: "The Three-Cornered Hat" (1934, Mario Camerini; in Italian).... ¶ Jan. 11 at 6: "The Small Hours" (1962, Norman C. Chaltin). Mr. Chaltin will be present.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Jan. 5 at 2 and 6:45: "Letting Go" (1992, Xia Gang).... ¶ Jan. 5 at 4:15 and 8:45: "Life on a String" (1990, Chen Kaige).... ¶ Jan. 6 at 2, Jan. 7 at 4 and 8:30, and Jan. 9 at 6:45: "Stand Up, Don't Grovel" (1992, Huang Jianxin).... ¶ Jan. 6 at 4:15 and Jan. 7 at 2 and 6:30: "The Story of Qiu Ju" (1992, Zhang Yimou).... ¶ Jan. 6 at 7 and Jan. 8 at 4:30: "My Time in the Red Guards" (1992, Wu Wenguang).... ¶ Jan. 8-9 at 2: "The Black Stallion" (†).... ¶ Jan. 8 at 8 and 10 and Jan. 9 at 4:30 and 9: "Family Portrait" (1992, Li Shaohong).... ¶ Jan. 10 at 2 and 6:30 and Jan. 11 at 4: "Heartstrings" (1992, Sun Zhou).... ¶ Jan. 10 at 4:15 and 8:45 and Jan. 11 at 2 and 8:30: "Women from the Lake of Scented Souls" (1992, Xie Fei).

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—"From Kern to Sondheim: American Musical Theatre on Television." Through Jan. 23: "Camelot" (1982), with Richard Harris and Meg Bussert. Showings Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 2:30.... Through Jan. 23: "Brigadoon" (1966), with Robert Goulet, Peter Falk, and Sally Ann Howes. Showings Wednesdays at 2:30, Thursdays at 6, and Fridays and Sundays at 2:30.... Jan. 7 at 6: "Bob Fosse: Steam Heat" (1990), a documentary.... ¶ The documentary films of Frederick Wiseman. Jan. 6 at 5:30 and Jan. 8 at 2: "Missile" (1988).... Jan. 7 at 6 and Jan. 9 at 2: "Model" (1981).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—Jan. 6 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "La Ronde" (1950, Max Ophuls; in French), with Gérard Philipe, Danielle Darrieux, Simone Signoret, and Jean-Louis Barrault.

Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—Jan. 6 at 2:30: "Mephisto" (1982, István Szabó ; in German), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.... ¶ Jan. 11 at noon: "Ashes and Diamonds" (1958, Andrzej Wajda; in Polish).

MOVIES IN BRIEF

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

The Air Up There—A college basketball coach (Kevin Bacon) travels to Africa to recruit a Winabi tribesman (Charles Gitonga Mainah). Directed by Paul Michael Glazer ("The Cutting Edge"). Opening January 7.

Cabin Boy—Returning to Hawaii after graduating from boarding school, a young man boards the wrong ship and takes a journey that changes his life. With Chris Elliott, Ritch Brinkley, James Gammon, Brion James, Melora Walters, and Russ Tamblyn. Directed by Adam Resnick. Opening January 7.

The Forbidden Quest—Using archival footage from the Netherlands Film Museum, director Peter Delpeut ("Lyrical Nitrate") tells the fictional story of an early-twentieth-century expedition to the South Pole. Opening January 5.

CURRENT FILMS

(The following notes are by Arlene Croce, Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

Beethoven's 2nd—A fetching mate named Missy for America's favorite St. Bernard. Four adorable puppies (including one named Tchaikovsky). A loving couple (Charles Grodin and Bonnie Hunt) who risk their comfy Pasadena manse for the husband's professional dream of putting an air freshener in every gym bag. Three kids (Nicholle Tom, Christopher Castile, and Sarah Rose Karr) who go through crises gleaned and updated from fifties sitcoms. A Cruella De Vil character (Debi Mazar)—a rapacious divorcée—and the obligatory "Home Alone"-style mayhem. These are the ingredients of this smug family-comedy sequel; it's like an oversugared breakfast cereal served up in a doggie bowl. Rod Daniel directed Len Blum's script.—M.S. (34th St. East, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

Blue—After "The Double Life of Véronique," the Polish director Krzysztof Kieślowski has come up with another lovely and perplexing film. Julie (Juliette Binoche) loses her husband and daughter in a car accident and sees that loss as a chance to break free. She moves to Paris, sheds a lover, and takes an apartment, but at every turn the past catches up. Her memories tend to rush back in with a burst of music (the husband was a composer); at times, the movie is more like a sound-and-light show than a drama. It could easily have been too grand and mournful for its own good, but it's lightened, against all expectation, by a glancing comedy. In French.—A.L. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/13/93.) (Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

A Dangerous Woman—As Martha, the dim-witted, shortsighted heroine of Stephen Gyllenhaal's picture, Debra Winger pulls out all the stops, but you can't help wishing she'd push a few back in. The cunning intensity of her playing is almost embarrassing, and it certainly lacks support; the rest of the movie drags sullenly behind, and the other characters harden into stereotypes, Gabriel Byrne's blue-eyed drinker being the worst offender. You keep waiting for the film to explode, as Martha's stubborn ways pull her toward disaster, but it stays marshy and joyless. Only David Strathairn—miscast as a sleazeball, but still as watchable as ever—gets the action moving; he and Winger share one bloody and breathless scene that puts the rest of the movie to shame.—A.L. (12/13/93) (Festival.)

George Balanchine's The Nutcracker—Not recommended for people who are not dance students, have no intention of seeing Balanchine's production on the stage, or have no patience with the idea that every utterance of live theatre, whether spoken, sung, danced, or mimed in subway tunnels, should somehow find its way onto film. With Darci Kistler as the Sugar Plum Fairy, Kyra Nichols as Dewdrop, and a bewildered Macaulay Culkin as the Nutcracker Prince.—A.C. (Reviewed under Dancing 12/27/93-1/3/94) (34th Street Showplace.)

Geronimo: An American Legend—With Wes Studi, directed by Walter Hill. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showcase, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Grumpy Old Men—A sentimental comedy in the feuding-friends genre of "The Sunshine Boys," set in a wintry Minnesota village where the main pastime is ice fishing. The bickering next-door neighbors are a retired high-school history teacher (Jack Lemmon) and a retired TV repairman (Walter Matthau) who jockey for the attention of a flighty, voluptuous widow (Ann-Margret, as a former Berkeley prof!) who moves in across the street. The only fresh thing about it is the snow-blown local color. Matthau and Lemmon have a few exuberant moments, but the laugh lines are quaint vulgarities and put-downs, and the triangle is hopelessly tricked up (Ann-Margret as a sexy-angelic lover of silly "mature" men is especially forced). The film stoops to almost killing a character so the audience can cheer when he's revived. During the closing credits, Burgess Meredith, as Lemmon's dad, nails some easy yucks in a series of outtakes by ad-libbing slang phrases for intercourse. Donald Petrie directed Mark Steven Johnson's script.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Coronet, Orpheum VII, and Columbus Circle.)

Mrs. Doubtfire—Robin Williams impersonates a stocky, middle-aged female housekeeper, and he's too inventive an actor not to get a few gigantic laughs out of the stunt. But the picture as a whole isn't in the class of "Tootsie" and "Some Like It Hot," mostly because its premise is sentimental, not cynical: Williams's character, a divorced man, becomes Mrs. Doubtfire in order to get around a court-ordered custody arrangement and spend more time with his adorable children. Lessons are learned, loved ones are hugged, and personal growth is achieved—as usual, at the expense of comedy. Some, apparently including Williams, like it warm and cuddly, too. Nobody's perfect. Directed—with a very heavy hand—by Chris Columbus.—T.R. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gotham Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and National Twin.)

The Pelican Brief—More like the Pelican Long-and-Drawn-Out: well over two hours of plots, subplots and super-subdialogue. The script is adapted from the novel by John Grisham, but not adapted enough. Two Supreme Court Justices are murdered, and Darby Shaw (Julia Roberts), a mere law student, decides that the trail leads all the way to the White House. She gets help from a journalist, played by Denzel Washington, who struggles manfully to keep her, and the movie, alive. (Only one of them survives.) The director is Alan J. Pakula, who shows his class in a couple of nervy murder sequences, but flounders through the rest of the story; it's a big comedown from the great days of "Klute" and "All the President's Men." Pale and overwrought, Julia Roberts looks worried that she may be in the wrong movie.—A.L. (12/27/93-1/3/94) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Philadelphia—Tom Hanks plays a lawyer dismissed from his firm, apparently for incompetence, but really because he has AIDS. Enter Denzel Washington as a personal-injury attorney—relaxed, witty, and homophobic, but prepared to fight for justice. The result is an unorthodox blend of courtroom drama and old-style weepie, and somehow it comes off. This is the first time that a major Hollywood studio has taken on the subject of AIDS, and in the wrong hands it could have gone badly off-key. But with Jonathan Demme in charge, there's a guarantee of taste and skill—if anything, the movie is too optimistic, convinced that everyone in America can be won round to its own standards of tolerance. Of course it should stand up for gay rights, but do we also need a speech about how wonderful lawyers are? Fortunately, this preachiness never swamps the picture, thanks largely to spirited playing from Tom Hanks, who looks full of life right up to the end; watch for the scene where he swoons to the sound of Maria Callas. The movie is affecting, sometimes silly, but determined to take risks.—A.L. (12/27/93-1/3/94) (Gemini.)

The Piano—Sometime in the last century, a Scottish mute called Ada (Holly Hunter) travels to New Zealand with her beloved piano and her daughter Flora (Anna Paquin). She is engaged to Stewart (Sam Neill), but it is his right-hand man, Baines (Harvey Keitel), who becomes the focus of her interest. He buys the piano, and gives her a chance to win it back: an erotic agreement that gathers intensity and drives the film onward to its gasping conclusion. The writer and director, Jane Campion, has turned her native New Zealand, with its desolate beach and writhing forests, into a potent backdrop; the rain and mud make the love story look like trench warfare—you come away from the movie battered and amazed. It's almost too wrought and compressed for its own good, but the performances breathe it full of life.—A.L. (11/29/93) (Angelika Film Center, 19th Street East 6, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Schindler's List—The story of Oskar Schindler (Liam Neeson), a dashing and resourceful German Catholic businessman who saved over a thousand Polish Jews from almost certain annihilation by the Nazis, is extraordinary even by the standards of Holocaust literature. Steven Spielberg's film, adapted by Steven Zaillian from the 1982 book by Thomas Keneally, runs better than three hours and doesn't seem a minute too long. Spielberg respects the essential mystery of the protagonist's heroism, and uses his prodigious skills with an intensity that he hasn't shown in a long time: he captures images of experiences that most of us thought we would never see represented adequately on the screen. This is by far the finest, fullest dramatic (i.e. nondocumentary) film ever made about the Holocaust. And few American movies since the silent era have had anything approaching this picture's narrative boldness, visual audacity, and emotional directness.—T.R. (12/20/93) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, and Regency.)

Shadowlands—Richard Attenborough's film chronicles the relationship between the British writer C. S. Lewis (played by Anthony Hopkins) and an American woman named Joy Davidman Gresham (Debra Winger). The screenplay, by William Nicholson (adapted from his earlier television and stage versions of the story), initially emphasizes the comic incongruity of the love affair: Lewis, a shy and scholarly bachelor in his fifties, suddenly falls hard for a blunt, outspoken woman who doesn't quite fit the profile of an Oxford professor's wife. But the real drama is in the poignant brevity of the relationship, which is cut short by Joy's death from cancer. Lewis, who never anticipated feeling intense romantic love, finds this twist of fate inconceivably cruel: the great experience of his life turns out to be a case of too much, too late. The picture isn't actually very good; it's just a tearjerker with clumsy interpolations of theology. (Lewis, a prominent Catholic thinker, is shown delivering lectures on the spiritual implications of happiness and pain.) Hopkins and Winger are fascinating to watch, though. The movie works best as a demonstration of the contrast between American and British acting styles (not to say national characters). In this context, Winger—who is, as always, vivid, honest, and intuitive—gives the whole idea of Americanness an astonishing radiance. And Hopkins, realizing that he has to put up some real emotional capital or else get blown off the screen, comes through with the most impassioned acting of his career. He seems transformed—affected as profoundly by his vibrant co-star as Lewis is by Joy. Also with Edward Hardwicke and John Wood.—T.R. (Beekman.)

Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit—This weary sequel comes to life only when Whoopi Goldberg does a Vegas girl-group medley, or when she puts her singing nuns through routines that flirt with sacrilege, such as a bopping rendition of "Ball of Confusion (That's What the World Is Today)." So why don't the producers go all the way and hand the next sequel over to John Waters? With troopers like Goldberg, Kathy Najimy, Mary Wickes, Wendy Makkena, and Maggie Smith, it's a pity that the screenwriters (James Orr, Jim Cruickshank, and Judi Ann Mason) can't come up with anything funnier than this "Bells of St. Mary's" retread about Whoopi saving a closure-threatened Catholic school. In the most ludicrous subplot, a poor African-American widow treats her daughter's love for singing as if it were a drug addiction or an unwanted pregnancy. This time, the sisters are matched with ecclesiastic brothers (including Barnard Hughes, Michael Jeter, and Brad Sullivan) and a classroomful of supposed teen-age scene-stealers. Bill Duke directed.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Guild, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

Six Degrees of Separation—Fred Schepisi's film of John Guare's brilliant play about affluent, liberal-seeming New Yorkers who are conned by a young, gay black man claiming to be the son of Sidney Poitier. It's as agile and as inventive a visualization of complex theatrical material as you'll ever see. Guare's script (which sticks close to the text of the play) is a virtuoso comedy of upper-middle-class Manhattan manners, and the writing is amazingly nimble and unpredictable. Surprise is both the method of the work and its meaning. The plot is full of twists, the chronology is murderously tricky, and the dialogue is all weird, unaccountable spins—every line comes at you like a screwball or a split-fingered fastball. Guare's subject is the possibility, and the necessity, of seeing the world through someone else's eyes. The odd empathy that develops between the privileged heroine, Ouisa (Stockard Channing), and the young hustler (Will Smith) is moving because it emerges, unexpectedly, out of their radically different—but equally ingenious—strategies for manipulating experience. Their cleverness, like Guare's, ultimately transcends itself. Schepisi's direction keeps the movie charging forward, driven by its locomotive wit, until near the end, when we find ourselves set down in a huge and thrillingly unfamiliar emotional landscape, hardly knowing how we got there. It's a wonderful ride. The terrific cast also includes Donald Sutherland, Mary Beth Hurt, Bruce Davison, and Anthony Michael Hall.—T.R. (Baronet, and Waverly.)

The Trial—Fans of Kafka—or of Orson Welles, who did the first film version—must have thought "How dare he?" when learning that David Jones ("Betrayal," "84 Charing Cross Road") had retold the story of Joseph K., bank employee and victim of the Law. Actually, Jones doesn't dare anything. He merely mounts a conventional, blow-by-blow adaptation, with dialogue that the screenwriter, Harold Pinter, has put into typically clipped and knowing Pinterese. The result is like a translation of a translation of a translation; it has zero vitality. With Kyle MacLachlan (Joseph K.), Anthony Hopkins, Jason Robards, Polly Walker, Juliet Stevenson, and Alfred Molina.—M.S. (Angelika 57.)

Wayne's World 2—The premise of this pleasantly messy sequel is that Wayne (Mike Myers) and Garth (Dana Carvey) have grown up. As Wayne puts it, "I'm a little older, I'm a little wiser, I'm starting to get hair in really weird places." The film is pretty hairy itself, although it lacks the sheer pointlessness of the original. In his dreams—funny the first time, less so as the movie goes on—Wayne meets Jim Morrison, who tells him to stage a rock concert in Aurora, Illinois. As if that weren't tricky enough, he has problems with his girlfriend (Tia Carrere, the Margaret Dumont of our time). Meanwhile, Garth is being introduced to the terrors of sex by Honey Hornée (Kim Basinger, in one of her more thoughtful roles). There are cameos from Charlton Heston and Drew Barrymore, snappy parodies of "The Graduate" and "Mission: Impossible," and a sublime Village People routine that comes out of nowhere. The director is Stephen Surjik, although it's hard to spot exactly what he does.—A.L. (19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, Waverly, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

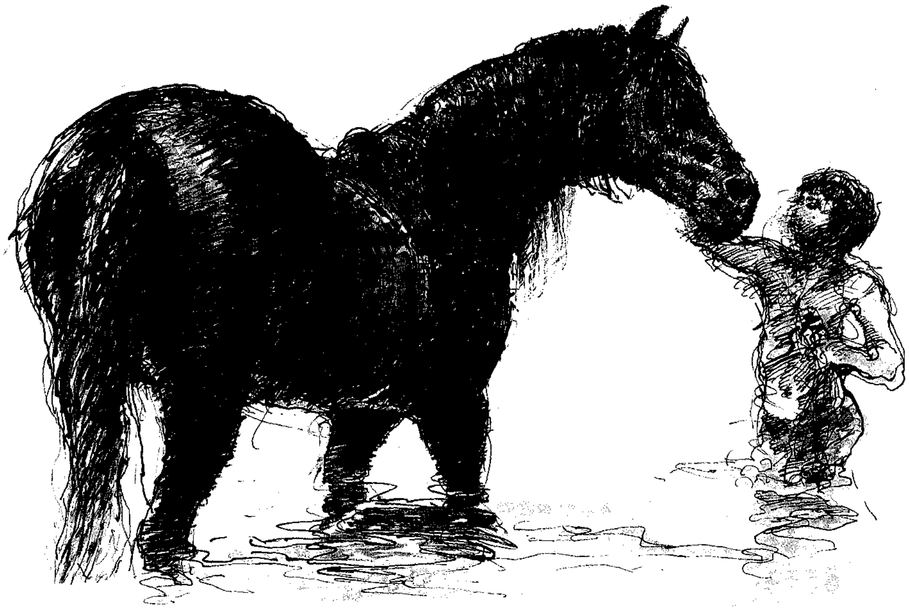
REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow.)

The Black Stallion (1979)—One of the rare movies that achieves a magical atmosphere. Seeing it is like being carried on a magic carpet; you don't want to come down. (It may be the greatest children's movie ever made.) In this first feature by Carroll Ballard (as in his earlier short films and documentaries), the visual imagination that he brings to the natural landscape is so intense that his imagery makes you feel like a pagan—as if you were touching when you're only looking. His great scenes have a sensuous, trancelike quality: the movie is set in 1949, but it seems outside time. And this distilled atmosphere makes it possible for a simple boy-and-animal story to be transformed into something mythological. The boy's sense of wonder recalls "Pather Panchali," but there are also elements of Arabian Nights fantasy that suggest the 1940 "The Thief of Bagdad," without that film's theatricality. When the boy, alone on a desert island with the horse, woos him with a gift of seaweed and finally rides him, you may agree with the man who said that when he saw this movie he felt that he was rediscovering the emotional sources of mystery and enchantment. With Kelly Reno as the eleven-year-old boy, and Mickey Rooney, Hoyt Axton, Teri Garr, and Clarence Muse. Based on the 1941 novel by Walter Farley; the screenplay is by Melissa Mathison (who later wrote "E.T."), Jeanne Rosenberg, and William D. Witliff. The cinematography is by Caleb Deschanel; the editing is by Robert Dalva.—P.K. (Walter Reade Theatre; Jan. 8-9.)

Jane Eyre (1944)—This burnished black-and-white adaptation boasts considerable drive and fervor early on, as young Jane (Peggy Ann Garner) rebels against the tyranny of her aunt and the life-denying religion of her charity school, and then, ten years later (in the person of Joan Fontaine), ventures out on her own to serve as governess at a forbidding estate called Thornfield. Jane's initial collision with Thornfield's master, Edward Rochester (Orson Welles), is everything a gothic-romantic encounter should be: dangerous, mysterious, and rousing. But then the screenplay loses its edge and becomes the stock tale of a stalwart woman piercing the troubled heart of an imperious rich man with a secret. Welles's rumbling, self-impressed brand of fustian brings to mind Kelsey Grammer of "Cheers" and "Frasier"—but Welles wasn't being humorous. Robert Stevenson directed; Aldous Huxley, John Houseman, and Stevenson wrote the script; Bernard Herrmann composed the music; the supporting cast includes Agnes Moorehead, Margaret O'Brien (doing a comical French accent), and the luminous young Elizabeth Taylor.—M.S. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 9.)

The Last Detail (1974)—After fourteen years in the Navy, Buddusky (Jack Nicholson), the tattooed signalman, lives on ingrained resentment, quick anger, and booze. The screenwriter, Robert Towne, shaped the role to Nicholson's gift for extremes, and it was the best full-scale part he'd had up to that time. (Some think it's the best part he's ever had.) The movie is the record of the beer-soaked journey that Buddusky and a gunner's mate (Otis Young) take when they're assigned to escort a morose eighteen-year-old seaman (Randy Quaid) from the brig in Norfolk, Virginia, to the naval prison in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The film is distinguished by the fine performances of Nicholson and Quaid, and by remarkably well-orchestrated profane dialogue. It's often very funny. It's programmed to wrench your heart, though—it's about the blasted lives of people who discover their humanity too late. Hal Ashby directed. Cinematography (grainy and gloomy) by Michael Chapman. Adapted from Darryl Ponicsan's book.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 11.)



At the Walter Reade Theatre, Kelly Reno in "The Black Stallion."

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

A VISIT WITH SHEIKH OMAR

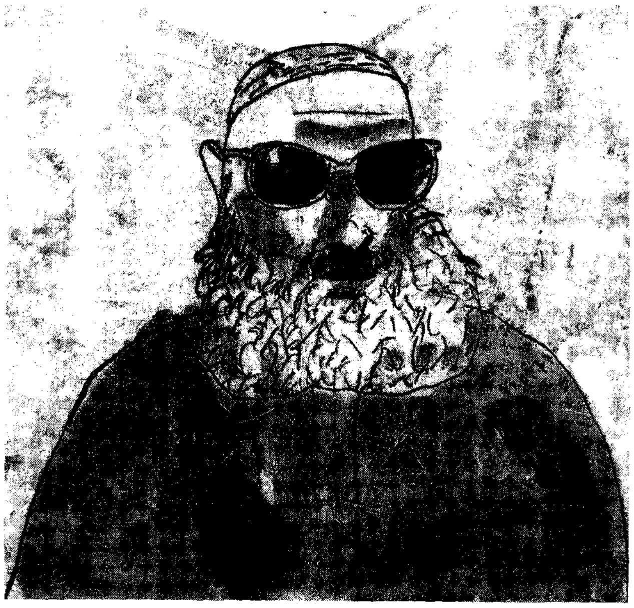
"I AM not a conspirator," Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman said. "And it makes absolutely no sense that I would conspire to blow up a city in which I chose to live. I'll tell you who the real conspirator is: the American government, and especially Janet Reno. She should be ashamed of herself. She knows full well that when Alfonse D'Amato went to see her, forty-eight hours—forty-eight hours—before she detained me, and asked her to indict me, she responded that she didn't even have enough evidence to *arrest* me, let alone indict me."

The Sheikh threw up his hands. He was seated on a metal chair at a Formica table, in a small room for visitors on the third floor of the Metropolitan Correctional Center, in lower Manhattan. He was dressed in a green prison shirt and a pair of matching trousers, and wore brown slippers on his feet. On his head was a plain white crocheted prayer cap, and his eyes were covered by heavy black glasses. With him at the table were his lawyer, William Kunstler, and an interpreter. His greeting, on this recent wintry afternoon, had been cordial, but he had made it clear that he would discuss neither the wiretaps of a secret F.B.I. informant, which are at the core of the government's case against him—he stands accused of seditious conspiracy in connection with the bombing of the World Trade Center and an alleged plan to bomb the United Nations and other New York landmarks—nor any other evidence to be presented at his trial, which is scheduled to begin later this year.

The Sheikh sipped a diet Coke and went on to say that in the days before he was indicted, last August, his immigration lawyer, Barbara Nelson, had been negotiating with the United States Attorney's office: if the Sheikh was released from prison, where he was being detained on an immigration technicality, and permitted to leave for Afghanistan, he would drop his appeal for political asylum and for the return of his green card, which had allowed him to remain in the United States. But when the Egyptian government learned of the negotiations, the Sheikh said, officials in Cairo "applied pressure on Washington, and Miss Reno simply acquiesced."

He then talked about Afghanistan and the war there, and about his first visit to the war-torn countryside, in 1985. The war in Afghanistan had been cathartic for him. He had raised money for the war, recruited Arab fighters, visited battles, and wept as he listened to the echo of crashing artillery shells. "When the Afghans rose and declared a jihad—and jihad had been dead for the longest time—I can't tell you how proud I was," he said. "It was no longer just in the Koran. It was there on the battlefield. And what a sense of pride I felt when the mujahideen drove the Soviets out of Afghanistan." He smiled.

The Sheikh was then asked about Mustafa Shalabi, who had been a confidant of his during the period, in 1990, when the Sheikh was preaching regularly in Brooklyn at the Al-Farouq mosque. The two had a falling-out after Shalabi was accused by officials of the mosque of having embezzled more than two million dollars that had been raised for Arab volunteers fighting in Afghanistan. In March of 1991, Shalabi's body was found in his Brooklyn apartment; there were stab wounds in his torso, and a bullet through his head. A federal grand jury is now investigating the murder.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

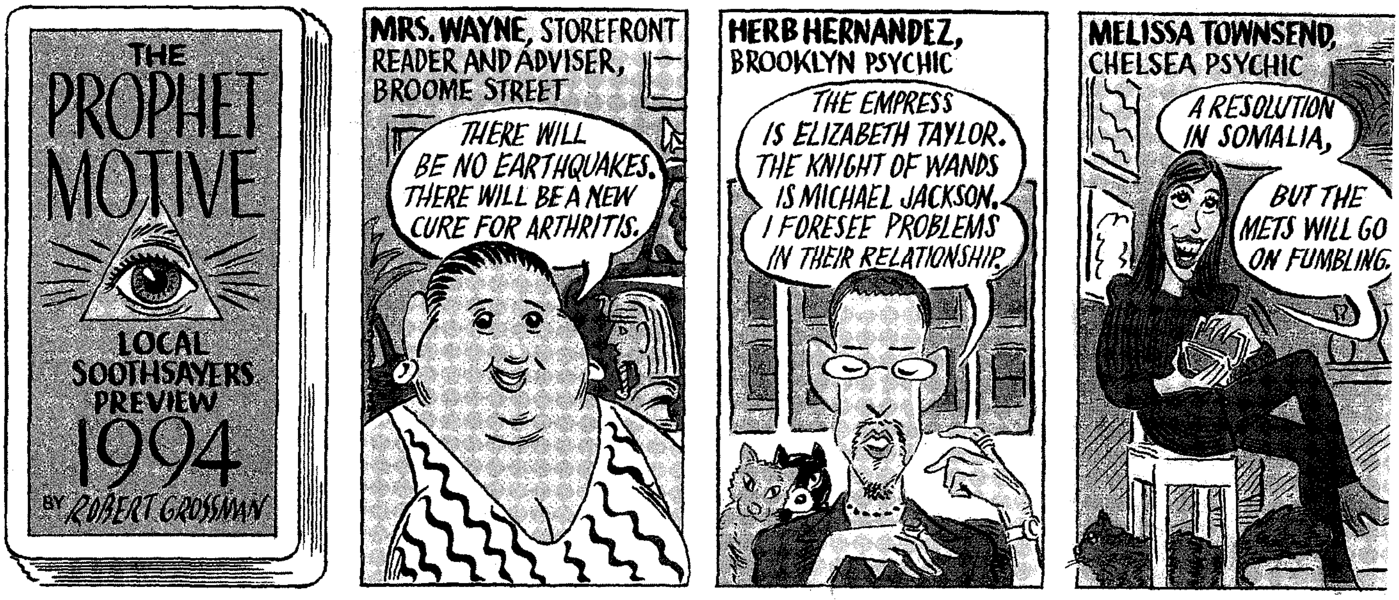
When the Sheikh was asked if he had denounced Shalabi as a bad Muslim, he grew noticeably tense, and said, "No, I did not."

Were notices posted in mosques? Was a *fatwa* issued?

"No," he replied. "There was nothing at all." He did not want to say anything else about Mustafa Shalabi.

He was asked a question about himself: What had radicalized him?

The question seemed to relax him a bit. "I guess it began with


THE PROPHET MOTIVE
LOCAL SOOTHSAYERS PREVIEW 1994
BY ROBERT GROSSMAN
MRS. WAYNE, STOREFRONT READER AND ADVISER, BROOME STREET
THERE WILL BE NO EARTHQUAKES. THERE WILL BE A NEW CURE FOR ARTHRITIS.
HERB HERNANDEZ, BROOKLYN PSYCHIC
THE EMPRESS IS ELIZABETH TAYLOR. THE KNIGHT OF WANDS IS MICHAEL JACKSON. I FORESEE PROBLEMS IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP.
MELISSA TOWNSEND, CHELSEA PSYCHIC
A RESOLUTION IN SOMALIA,
BUT THE METS WILL GO ON FUMBLING.

the injustice around me in Egypt during Nasser's regime. Then the periods of detentions, the imprisonments"—largely from 1981 through 1984, when he was charged with (and acquitted of) having issued a *fatwa* that resulted in the assassination of President Anwar Sadat.

Had he been tortured in prison?

"In many ways. At least ten different methods were used on me, among them being hung from the ceiling by my ankles, being beaten with sticks, and receiving electric shocks. Yet, in spite of all this, the United States government does not believe that I deserve political asylum in the United States."

The Sheikh had worked alongside the United States government in Afghanistan, preaching jihad and recruiting volunteers. Now he was in a prison in the United States. How did he feel about that?

He thought for a moment, and replied, "Do you think we were naïve enough to believe that the United States government was helping the Afghans because it believed in their cause—to raise the flag of jihad for Islam? Absolutely not. The Americans were there to punish the Soviet Union. And when they were sure the Soviet Union was about to collapse, they stopped everything—all the aid, all the equipment—just like that. They didn't care that there was still a Communist government in power in Afghanistan." He fell silent, as if he were considering whether to go on, and then said, "But what bothers me, and makes me feel bitter about the whole thing, is when a person who was called a freedom fighter then is now called, when the war is over, a terrorist."

Did he believe that there was a connection between the war that the "freedom fighters" had waged in Afghanistan and what was happening today in Egypt and Algeria, where militant Islamic movements were seeking to wrest control of those countries' governments?

"Absolutely," the Sheikh said without hesitation. "These are most definitely linked." He leaned back in his chair and began rocking a bit, his gray-white beard resting on his chest.

REVEALED! MAYOR A 42 REGULAR! "NUTS" ABOUT CHECKED JACKET, SOURCE SEZ

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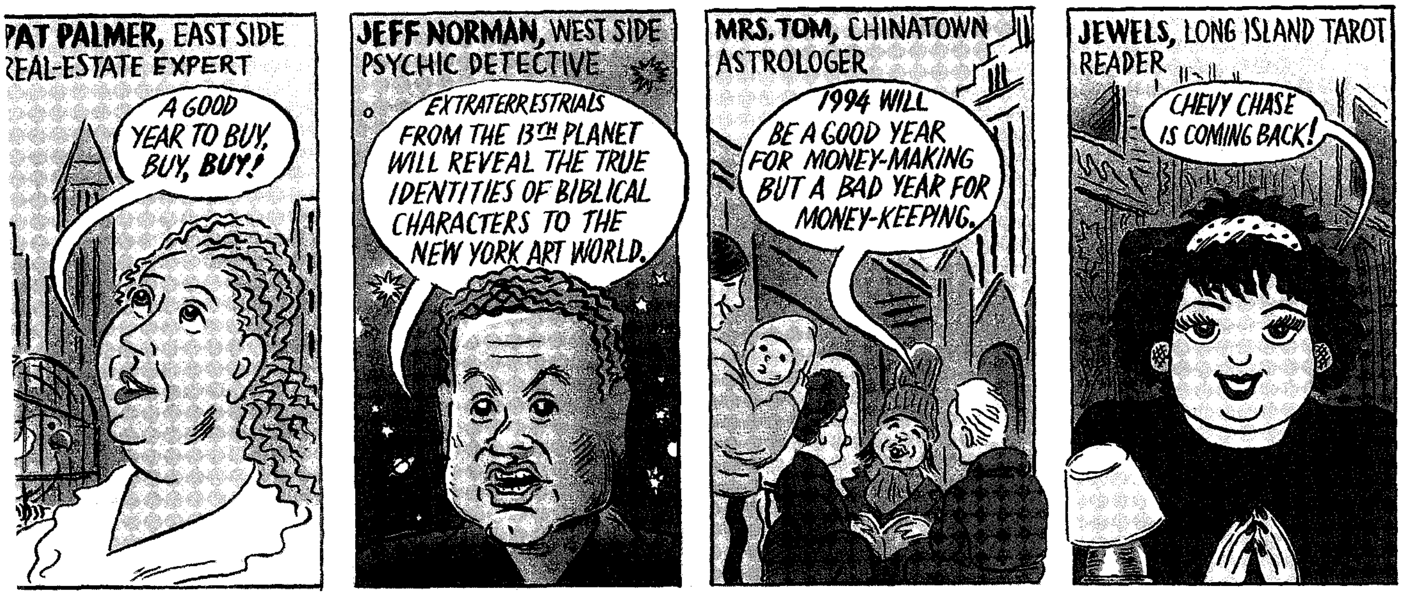
GREAT news for New Yorkers: Your new Mayor is not misshapen!

In a startlingly candid interview with *The New Yorker*, Harold Hershkowitz, of the alterations department at BFO Menswear, on Fifth Avenue and Twenty-first Street, revealed that Mayor Rudolph Giuliani is a picture-perfect 42 regular. "He's really not a bad fit," Hershkowitz divulged. "He's not odd-shaped or misshapen. He doesn't need anything drastic. He just needs a little here and there on the collar, and then, of course, the bottoms."

Another source very close to the clothing of the newly elected Mayor—Andrew Steinfeld, the owner and president of BFO's New York store—told *The New Yorker* that Mr. Giuliani had "experimented a little" in the decade he has patronized the store, an off-price retailer with a no-frills presentation. "Eight years ago, Rudy was wearing F.B.I.-type clothing," Steinfeld reported. "We wanted to move him into a more sophisticated, with-it look. Not a dumb look—a smart look. At first, he was buying very traditional suits. We graduated him to an Italian look, and then graduated him from that into what we like to call an updated traditional look. It's not an extreme Italian look."

When queried, Hershkowitz confirmed this. "That's right," he confessed to *The New Yorker*. "It's not an extreme Italian look."

Steinfeld disclosed to a good friend that the look is "ventless, for one thing, and cut with a little lower button in front. What makes it traditional is the flaps on the pockets." He added, "It's very nice. It's almost exactly the way President Clinton dresses. It was perfect for Rudy for the campaign. After all, he was running against a very well-dressed man."


PAT PALMER, EAST SIDE REAL-ESTATE EXPERT
A GOOD YEAR TO BUY, BUY, BUY!
JEFF NORMAN, WEST SIDE PSYCHIC DETECTIVE
EXTRATERRESTRIALS FROM THE 13TH PLANET WILL REVEAL THE TRUE IDENTITIES OF BIBLICAL CHARACTERS TO THE NEW YORK ART WORLD.
MRS. TOM, CHINATOWN ASTROLOGER
1994 WILL BE A GOOD YEAR FOR MONEY-MAKING BUT A BAD YEAR FOR MONEY-KEEPING.
JEWELS, LONG ISLAND TAROT READER
CHEVY CHASE IS COMING BACK!

Hershkowitz interrupted his candid interview to wait on a customer who needed a little taken in on the sides, cuffs, and waist. (Although Hershkowitz declined comment at the time, *The New Yorker* has learned that this customer is well built, with no waist and no behind, and at no time has been linked in a red-hot love affair with "Dynasty," "T.J. Hooker," and "Melrose Place" brat-beauty Heather Locklear.)

So will the Mayor be making fashion waves in New York's future?

Steinfeld wouldn't confirm reports that the store has been overrun by alien beings and obsessed Rudy wannabes from the minute it opens every day at 10 A.M. until the exhausted sales staff leaves at seven, but he did reveal for the first time ever that the Mayor is a man with a taste for grays and navies, Super 100 wools, things with a nice drape, and suits "with excellent hanger appeal."

"Frankly, during the campaign he became a clothes addict," Hershkowitz recently confided to a pal. "You hear he loves navies and grays, but he also loves tans and muted stripes. He's also nuts about a certain checked sport coat. He wears it all the time. It's as if he's hung up on it. We're trying to get him off the sport coat now. During the campaign, shopping was his relaxation. He came in at least once a week. One time he even called Herman Badillo from the store to come and join him, which he did, and Herman bought a navy-blue cashmere blazer."

Steinfeld confirmed the report about Badillo, adding, "I don't really know if we'll see Herman again. I'm not sure if he needs clothes anymore." As for the sport coat, Steinfeld was mum, saying only, "I really don't want to talk about the sport coat."

PATTI DAVIS, RONALD REAGAN, AND THE UNFORGIVEN

LIKE many Americans, Patti Davis still has all this anger toward Ronald Reagan. Unlike almost every other American, Patti Davis has all this anger toward Ronald Reagan as *father*. Like many Americans, Patti Davis is into healing. Unlike almost every other American, she gets people to pay twenty-nine dollars to watch her work at it. More than a hundred people were watching her work at it the other night in the ballroom of the Doral Inn, where, for three hours, she led a Learning Annex seminar titled "Recovering from Dysfunctional Families." Wearing a cropped black jacket over a low-cut top, skintight black-and-gray striped slacks, and over-the-knee black suède boots, and speaking in a honeyed, Jane Fonda-ish voice, she said, "It's not that difficult to see that all the problems in the world can be traced back to kids having temper tantrums, except that they're not kids anymore—they're adults with guns. Forgiveness. You're going to hear that a lot tonight."

It took her a long time, she said, to forgive her father for his Central America policy, but she did. "I've really been tested," she said. "Nicaragua was a severe test." It took her even longer, she said, to forgive her mother, Nancy, for slapping her around. In her twenties, she had a tubal ligation to prevent herself from *becoming* her mother. But she did forgive her—and had the ligation reversed. And, more recently, she forgave her errant fiancé—he'd returned to his old girlfriend shortly before the day he and Patti were to be married. Actually, she was never *really* angry with him, she said. "I never was," she said. "It was so interesting."

Patti Davis, despite all the anger she had toward Ronald Reagan, continues, at the age of forty-one, to flash his big smile. She has his jaw, too. "My father was the child of an alcoholic," she said. "He has talked about having to pull his father off the front porch dead drunk." She didn't talk about how this might or might not have shaped his Central America policy, about which she had all this anger, but she did talk about the male role models he might or might not have had. "You know," she said, "in the fifties men's role models were John Wayne and Errol Flynn—not to belittle the talents of these people."

Her cheekbones are her mother's, and she's thin like her mother, too. The very first question she took from the audience was one from a woman wanting to know, "What size are you?"

"Six or eight," Patti replied.

"Not four?" another woman asked.

Patti took a lot of other questions. Well, not questions, exactly. It was more like people getting out all this anger, none of which had to do with Ronald Reagan or his Central America policy. "I'm fifty-four," one man said. "My mother held my penis while I urinated—I wasn't allowed to touch it. And when she held it she would say, 'No girl will ever marry you with such a small petsy.' " He went on to say that now "I'm shocked when I look in the mirror and find I'm normal," and he ended by saying, "The winners need the losers, the losers need the winners—all the dualities are trapped in a house of mirrors. And you have broken free. And thank you."

"Thank *you,*" Patti said. "I'd like to acknowledge you for being the articulate person you are. Congratulations."

A woman who appeared to be in her mid-fifties and was wearing a neck brace said, "I at one time, due to abuse from my mother, gained one hundred and fifty pounds." Her husband was similarly abusive: "I married my mother," the woman said. "My mother will be eighty-two on Wednesday. I'm looking for some guidance in this."

"Are you still married?" Patti asked.

"I am *very* happily divorced."

"It doesn't sound to me as though you have forgiven your mother. Real happiness comes from forgiveness. If you forgive, it won't bother you."

"But it does. It hurts."

"No one says it's easy. Forgiveness means that as a child of God I'm going to forgive another child of God, because at some level she didn't mean it. I don't go on shopping trips with my mother. It would be nice, but I never will. But, because I've forgiven her, it doesn't matter."

"But what about the bad days? When you pick up the phone and she—"

"Don't *have* a conversation with your *mother* when you're having a *bad* day!"

There were more stories, most of them sad. Patti Davis listened, and stressed forgiveness, and tried to be upbeat. At one point, she said, "I think I have an obligation to say to people who are going through whatever stage they're going through, 'Hey, you know what? It keeps going on, but it gets easier and you learn more and more. It gets easier and you keep getting healthier.' "

Near the end of the evening, one woman—thinking, maybe, that Patti Davis had not really put her father's Central America policy behind her—said, "I feel your pain. But isn't the basis of recovery moving on?"

Patti Davis said, "I'd have to say you haven't been listening to what's been happening tonight. You know what? I reserve the right between me and God to determine for myself what I am best at. I respect your opinion to want me to be something else, but I reserve my right to determine for myself what I think is my most fulfilling role on earth."

THE ULTIMATE FREEDOM IN PERFECT EXISTENCE MAY BEGIN AT A FUND-RAISER

In the eighties, it was money. In the nineties, it's still money, but it's also Buddhism. Or it will be Buddhism, as soon as people realize that Eastern spiritualism provides a perfect corrective to Western materialism without exactly displacing it. That was the message to be taken away from a fancy dinner party held not long ago in the Synod Hall of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The purpose of the dinner was to raise money for *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*, an attractive quarterly magazine, whose readership is fifty per cent non-Buddhist and whose supporters include Laurie Anderson, Roy Lichtenstein, and Henry Luce III. The chairman of *Tricycle's* board of advisers is Lex Hixon, a big man with penetrating eyes, which appear to have been steeped in the ineffable. He was wearing a maroon-and-greenish-blue robe that had religious significance and looked like an extremely suave smoking jacket. He said that the evening was "a coming-out party for Buddhism in American culture."

Although *Tricycle* is not, strictly speaking, a sectarian publication, it does not shy away from theological subjects. A recent article about the Buddhist implications of organ transplants, for example, prompted a registered nurse from Albuquerque to write, "If memories are transplanted with major organs, is some karma also?" The magazine's name was thought up by its editor-in-chief, Helen Tworkov, who had wanted to call it something friendly sounding—something that wouldn't scare away people who did not yet think of themselves as Buddhists. A tricycle is a beginner's vehicle, her thinking went, and Zen Buddhists speak of the "beginner's mind"; a tricycle has three wheels, and in Buddhism threeness is symbolically important. Other members of the Buddhist community were wary at first, she acknowledged, but ultimately they came around. The Dalai Lama himself is said to like the name, and in the Fall 1993 issue of *Tricycle* he suggests a further interpretation: the handlebars could be said to symbolize relative truth and absolute truth.

It seemed absolutely clear that relatively many of the guests were practicing Buddha-like tolerance during the evening's principal entertainment—readings from Jack Kerouac's fantastical biography of the Buddha entitled "Wake Up." Or maybe there was a lot of meditating going on. ("Waking up" is a rough, idiomatic, on-the-roadish synonym for "enlightenment"; the biography had never been published until *Tricycle* began serializing it last summer.) The best reader was David Byrne, who was wearing his hair in a small ponytail: it accentuated his spirituality even though it made him look from the front like Eddie Munster and from the side like Tonto. But then he didn't actually read from "Wake Up"; he chanted lines from Kerouac's essay "On the Origins of a Generation" while strumming an electric guitar. The scariest readers were three people who looked like the guest stars of a hypothetical "Star Trek" episode called "Voyage to the Planet of the Beatniks." The most depressing reader was Liz Swados, whose voice was dreamy and sad, and who looked like the only no-candy mom at play-group. The nicest-seeming reader was Ellen Burstyn, who read her section in a firm, nonhistrionic voice and didn't blush when she got to the part about the enticement of Prince Siddhartha by the beautiful girls: "They made many winsome moves . . . caressed his wrists . . . removed roses from their bosoms." ♦

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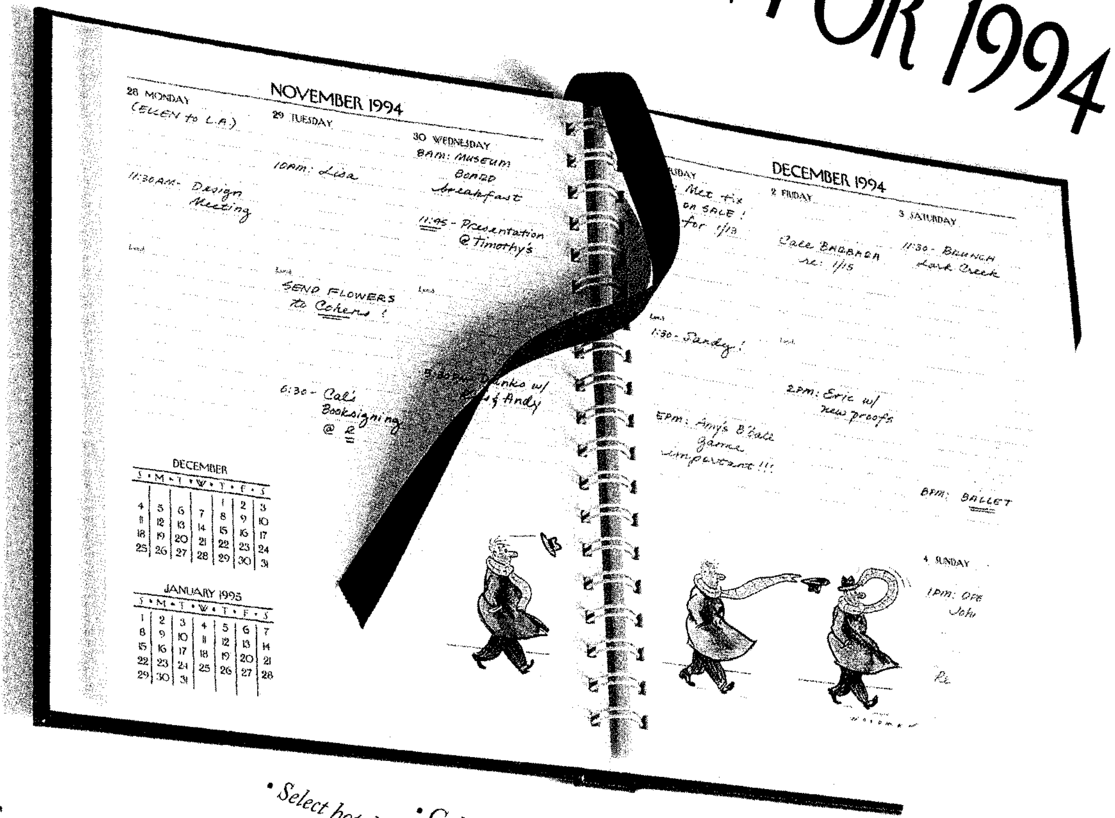

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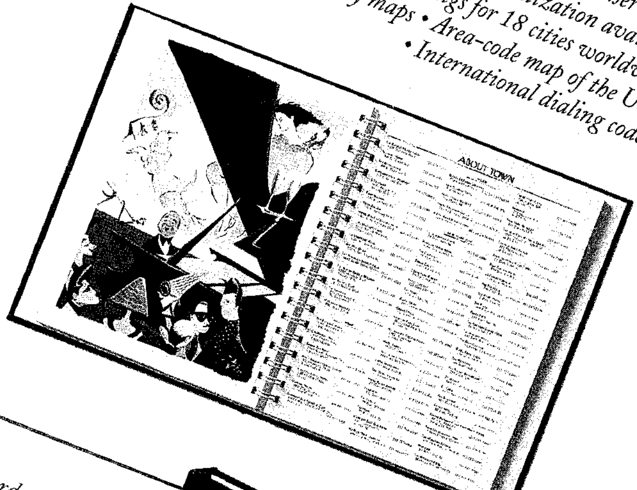

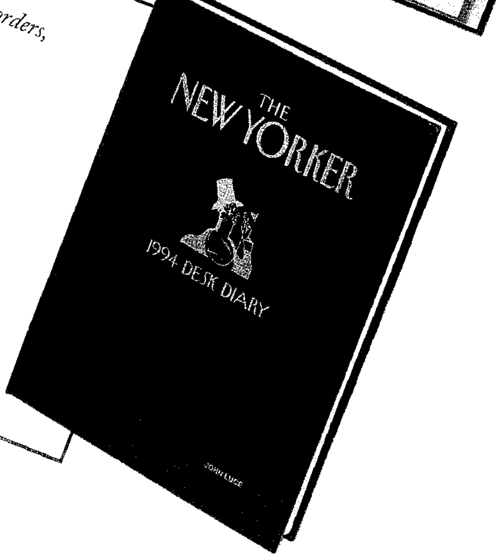

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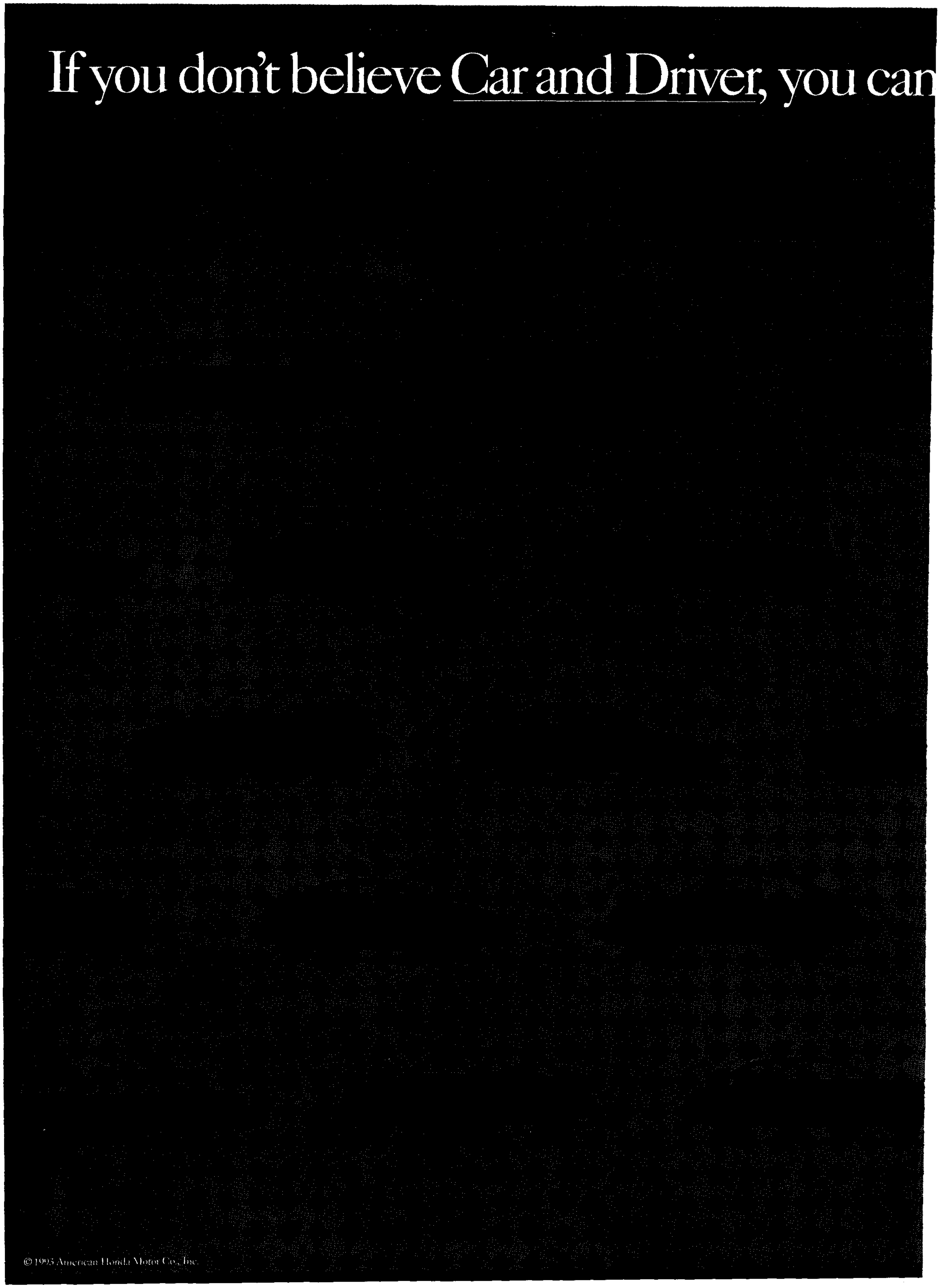

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A Car Ahead HONDA

RING IN THE NEW

As David Dinkins bows out, the city wakes up to its Republican leader, Rudolph Giuliani.

BY ANDY LOGAN

IN this year's winter-holiday season, the big news for many New Yorkers was the scheduled arrival at City Hall of Rudolph Giuliani as the city's hundred-and-seventh mayor. Giuliani is the first mayor elected on the Republican line in twenty-eight years; he also made history on November 2nd by defeating New York's first black mayor, David Dinkins, who thus became the first black mayor of a major American city to lose a bid for reëlection after a single term in office. For much of the season, however, many members of the public and the press seemed to have their minds on another series of news events: the suddenly announced engagement and the marriage plans, honeymoon location, and details of the wedding of Donald Trump and Marla Maples: the six-foot cake, the two-million-dollar diamond tiara (on loan from the jeweller). The wedding was held on December 20th at the Plaza Hotel—which, conveniently, is owned by the groom, along with his creditors—and a thousand guests attended. Exclusive rights to cover the ceremony had been sold to the *National Enquirer*. Besides celebrities from the sports and show-biz worlds, the guests included quite a few whose faces would also be seen at the Giuliani inauguration, in exclusive coverage of which the *Enquirer* had shown no interest. Among them were City Council Speaker Peter Vallone, Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau, Representative Charles Rangel, and Senator Alfonse D'Amato. Giuliani did not attend, although he had been invited, but Dinkins was on hand, wearing a brilliant smile and his favorite tuxedo and familiar flowing white scarf, which supporters of his mayoral opponent had liked to suggest was his typical mayoral uniform. Three days earlier, Trump and the future Mrs. Trump had come down to City Hall and got their wedding license directly from the Mayor. Less celebrated applicants for such documents must go to the second floor of the dingy Municipal Building, a block to the east, wait in line for what may be some time, sign various papers, and pay thirty dollars to a representative of the city clerk. For Trump, the thing was done in style in City Hall's Blue Room, and was recorded by a mob of photographers. Dinkins knows how to handle such licensing matters, having served as the city clerk himself for ten years before he took on the responsibilities of running the city. After accepting the thirty dollars, he kissed the bride and broke out some champagne (upstate New York—after all, there is a budget crisis). This was the big event on the Mayor's schedule for the day. No one was surprised that the tabloids ran pictures of the City Hall scene and the wedding itself on their front pages, but even the *Times* went along. The Blue Room tableau, for example, was covered by the paper's former City Hall bureau chief, Todd Purdum, in a front-page story—accompanied by a three-column photograph of the Mayor kissing the bride again, on City Hall's steps—that began, "The middle-aged master builder finally decides to marry the actress-model mother of his infant child, a week after she unveils her new line of maternity clothes."

Dinkins will doubtless remember the afternoon when he could be helpful to the Trumps at City Hall as a blessed contrast to many of his other days there—particularly those of the past year, which have been no fun at all. From time to time in the midst of the bitterness of local mayoral campaigns—the one that ended on November 2nd having been among the ugliest in recent history—some New Yorkers on the sidelines will ask themselves why anyone would voluntarily go through such an ordeal, knowing what victory will mean:

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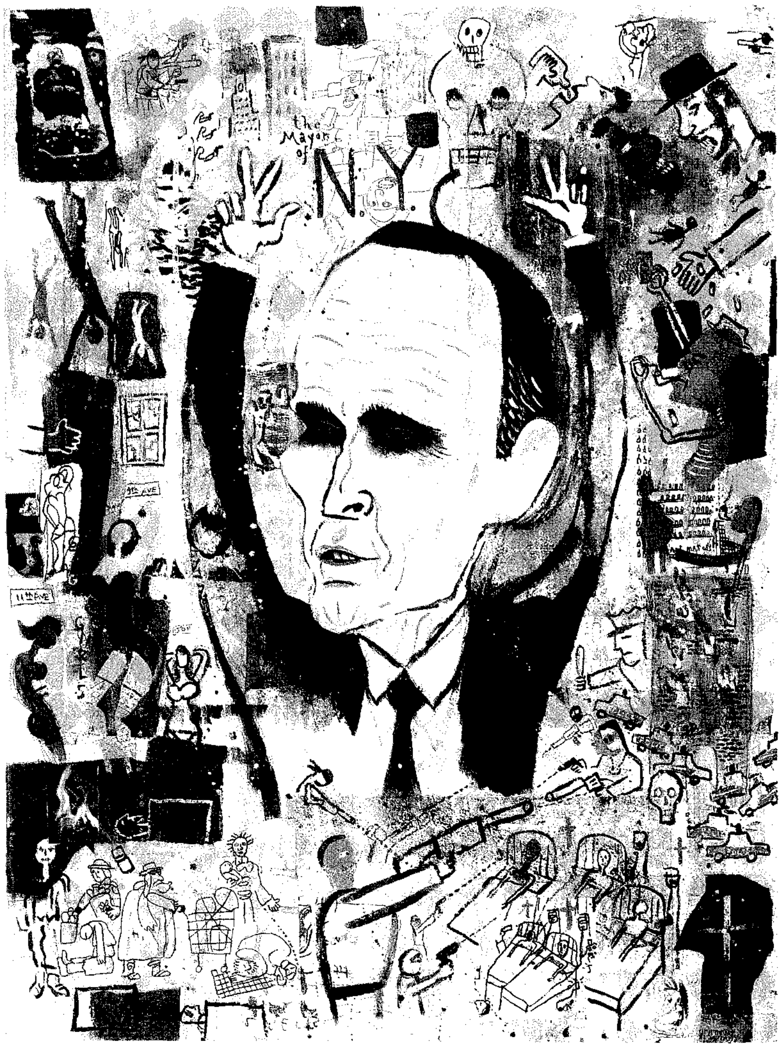
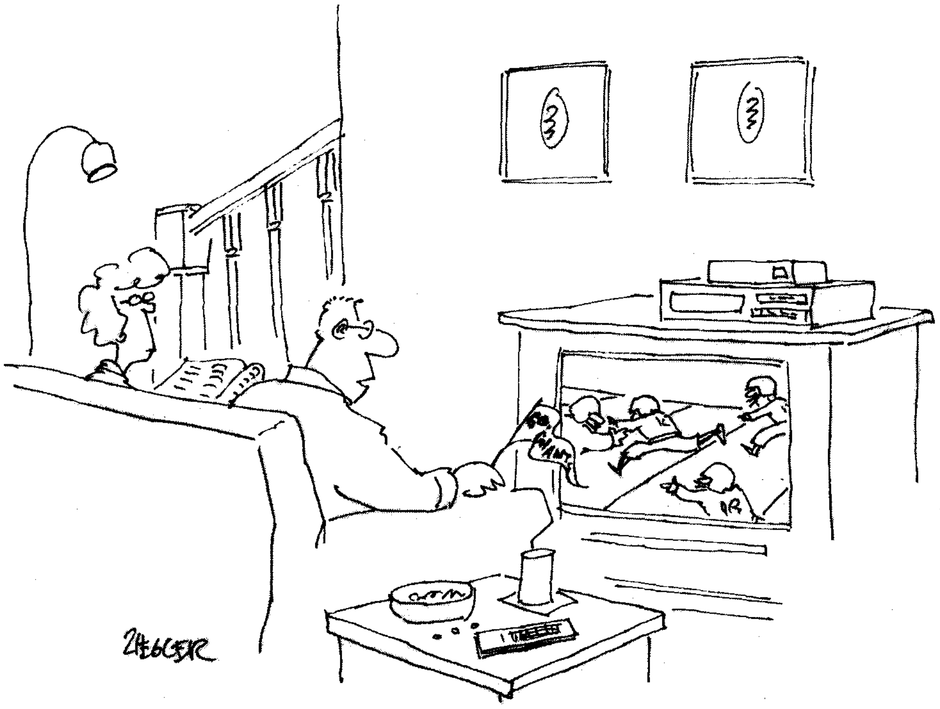
the opportunity to be confronted daily by crises over dwindling financial resources, falling-down bridges, and possible terrorist attacks; by demands that the mayor do something about murders in the streets, homeless people cluttering the sidewalks, and the Yankees' threatened move to New Jersey; and the prospect that any time the mayor looks out a City Hall window he may see the Reverend Al Sharpton advancing up the steps to demand action against some alleged mayoral delinquency. One answer to why people run for the office of mayor is that its perquisites include the right to live in Gracie Mansion, which was built in 1799—a year before John Adams moved into the White House—as part of a gentleman's farm along the East River at what is now East Eighty-eighth Street. The man who built it, Archibald Gracie, is usually described as a merchant prince rather than as a predator, a term more often applied nowadays to enterprising rich men—including Trump. The mansion's attractions include an old-fashioned veranda overlooking a broad lawn that leads down to the river, with the glittering blue lights of the Triborough Bridge—still intact—in the distance. When Edward Koch, during his third term as mayor, announced at his annual Christmas party for City Hall reporters that in 1989 he intended to run for a fourth term (his mayoral plans ended with his defeat by David Dinkins in the Democratic primary), he said, "I have no intention of giving up this house." In fact, he stayed beyond the expiration of his lease four years ago, using the mansion for a New Year's Eve party—an event that, by its nature, does not end by 12:01 A.M. on January 1st. Dinkins, who had given some thought to using the mansion for his legal swearing-in as mayor, just after midnight (the grand inaugural ceremony at City Hall traditionally comes later), had to look elsewhere. This year, Dinkins, more accommodating, had made no plans for a New Year's Eve party, but, in any case, Giuliani arranged to have the legal swearing-in at the home of a friend—the judge who was to perform the ceremony.


the Mayor of N.Y.

Now that the Giuliani family, which includes his wife, Donna Hanover—a former local news anchor who is currently an anchor at a new cable network devoted to food—and Andrew, seven, and Caroline, four, are moving in, children will be living in the mayor's house for the first time since John Lindsay and his wife, Mary, arrived there, in 1966, with four children, ranging in age from fifteen down to six. Soon afterward, Lindsay had a tree house built in the back yard. The last remnant of the Lindsay family's presence was removed by Koch after he was elected and had the tree house knocked down. In Washington, after Reagan moved into the White House, people driving past could see knocked-down remnants of Amy Carter's tree house. In both cases, the demolitions were ascribed not to Reagan's and Koch's desire to get rid of pesky reminders of their predecessors but to security requirements. So far, Giuliani, who until November 2nd had never been elected to any office, has been far too busy making appointments—some of which have been poorly received, and which include four deputy mayors and several of some forty new commissioners, who will help him decide the wisest way to disburse the thirty-one billion dollars that running the city costs each year—to think about tree houses.

The subject of children living in the mayor's house arose after the death, on November 15th, of Robert Wagner, Jr., of a heart attack, at the age of forty-nine. Wagner was the grandson of a Robert Wagner who served for more than two decades as a Democratic United States senator from New York, and the son of another Robert Wagner, who was the city's mayor for three terms. He himself had been a Democratic member of the City Council and, in the Koch years, a deputy mayor, the chairman of the City Planning Commission, the president of the Board of Education, and the head of the Health and Hospitals Corporation. Friends recalled that when he was asked why he had never shown any interest in running for mayor he pointed out that he had already spent twelve years living in Gracie Mansion, which his father had moved into when he was ten. Last October, Wagner had shaken the local political scene—and, certainly, Mayor Dinkins—when he endorsed Giuliani for mayor, saying that although he remained "a very proud Democrat," one had to think of what was best for the city. Many New Yorkers will continue to believe that the Wagner endorsement is what made the difference in the mayoral race, by leading other lifelong Democrats to conclude that rejecting Dinkins in favor of a Republican was not a betrayal, since it was for the city's sake. Wagner had not planned to join the Giuliani administration but had hoped to advise the new mayor on governing the city, a subject on which Wagner, despite his non-showoff style, was an expert. ("THE MAN WHO GOT THINGS DONE IN NEW YORK CITY" was a *Times* headline over an account of his quiet achievements.) He could also have been helpful in encouraging in the new mayor, who may need it, an awareness of the human costs of government and of doctrinaire political philosophies—an awareness that is a family inheritance. It was once suggested to Senator Wagner that his having risen to be a great power in the Senate from a lowly start in Yorkville, where his mother took in washing, was a reminder that poor kids could pull themselves up by their bootstraps. "I came through it, yes," the Senator said. "That was luck, luck, luck. Think of the others!" The youngest Robert Wagner, in speeches he wrote for Koch, sometimes had the Mayor promising to reach out to less fortunate, often black New Yorkers. On occasions when Koch was reminded that he hadn't followed through, he would say crossly, "I didn't say those things. Bobby Wagner said those things."

Two thousand people attended the funeral Mass for Bobby Wagner in St. Patrick's Cathedral on November 19th. They included not only the city's present and future mayors but three former mayors: Lindsay, Abraham Beame, and Koch, who left with tears rolling down his cheeks. The Mass was celebrated by William Cardinal Baum, who had come here from the Vatican for the occasion. Both he and John Cardinal O'Connor mentioned that Wagner did things not for political reasons but because they were right for the city. As Dinkins made his way out of St. Patrick's, people nearby were astonished to see that his face was contorted with rage. When a good friend of Dinkins' was asked later "Why is the Mayor so angry?" he concluded—not for attribution—that Dinkins' anger was stirred by what he took to be the Cardinals' praise of Wagner's endorsement of Giuliani, which may have cost the city's first black mayor his reëlection bid.



"When I first heard about the move from CBS to Fox, I was sad, because I figured that was it—it would never be the same. But then I had a revelation—an epiphany, if you will—and I realized that, hey, it will be the same. It will always be the same."

SOME local residents will not soon forget the spectacle of the sizable army of prominent Democrats, including Bill Clinton and Al Gore, that invaded this city from Washington last fall in an effort to reëlect Dinkins, whom Clinton called his dear friend and partner, and whom Gore described as "this great and good man." Especially memorable were the visitors' game attempts to suppress their routine references to the blessings that political change—that is, their own victory in the 1992 Presidential election—had, in their view, brought to the country. The blessings of political change were, of course, the last thing an incumbent mayor running for reëlection would be hoping for.

The invaders also often talked of the beneficial uses of diversity among officeholders. In these discussions, one voting bloc that was hardly ever mentioned was Republicans. Last summer, when a series of official revelations alleged failure on the part of the Dinkins administration to give responsible attention to various city crises—revelations that helped support Giuliani's contention that Dinkins was not up to the job—the Mayor complained that the reports were a distraction from the point he had been trying to make in his campaign, which was that his opponent, Giuliani, was a *Republican*. The Mayor spoke this word in a tone of great distaste, and suggested that the distaste was apparently shared by Giuliani, whom he accused of trying to conceal his true affiliation. Dinkins' rival may have thought he would be forgiven for not proclaiming himself a Republican in a city in which the enrollment is five to one Democratic. Instead, he ran on what he called a Fusion ticket, as a candidate on both the Republican and the Liberal party lines, with two Democratic running mates. A similar ruse, including the Fusion label, had helped to disguise the G.O.P. taint for Fiorello LaGuardia and Lindsay, who until this year were the only Republicans to be elected mayor of New York since 1903.

It is no secret that, in the Great Out There, New York is considered an aberrant place. (In a recent televised discussion of the rising crime rate, the columnist Robert Novak said that, as he understood it, "murder is still a felony, even in New York.") Since the city's politics are viewed by many out there as excessively liberal, it is a matter of some astonishment that the big victories the Republican National Committee is now bragging about include not only senate races in Georgia and Texas and governors' races in Virginia and New Jersey but also, confounding the Democrats' theory that they should be seen as the party of the cities, the election of the mayor of the nation's second-largest city (in Los Angeles last June, Richard Riordan became the first Republican elected in thirty-six years) and, now, that of the mayor of its largest city. A Dinkins campaign commercial held Giuliani, a former United States Attorney under Reagan, responsible for many of the most unpopular policies of the Reagan and Bush Administrations, though many of them were policies he had had nothing to do with formulating. "Can we afford to vote for someone who stands for everything we've fought against?" the Dinkins campaign asked local voters in the commercial's kicker. Better not to ask, perhaps. In a late-September visit to the city, Henry Cisneros, Clinton's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, urged New Yorkers to reëlect Dinkins, because "the largest city in America cannot have a Republican mayor." He added, "What sense would it make to have fought so hard to put a Democrat in the White House and then put a Republican in City Hall?" Not quite official figures for November 2nd show Giuliani to have won by fifty-three thousand votes out of a million eight hundred thousand cast, compared with the forty-seven thousand by which he had lost to Dinkins in 1989.

On Election Day, polls in most of the local dailies reported that the mayoral race was too close to call. Until then, Dinkins had been slightly ahead, but some upward movement for the challenger turned it into a photo finish. Giuliani half jokingly (but who could say?) credited this development to Clinton's having worn a cap that said "Rudy" when he went jogging near the White House on the morning of October 28th. Someone had sent the cap to the President as a promotional stunt for the movie of that name, about Rudy Ruettiger, an unlikely football hero who finally realized his dream of playing for Notre Dame. Later that day, Clinton flew to Queens for another Dinkins-boosting appearance. (Clinton may be from Arkansas, but he knows better than to refer to "the Queens," as George Bush did a few years back.) By the time the President arrived in New York, a Dinkins campaign operative had rustled up a cap for him promoting another movie—"Dave." On the morning after the election, Clinton called Dinkins to express regret for the disappointing outcome, despite all the hard work that had been put into the cause—by him, among others. There was some evidence that he took the result personally. He did not call to congratulate Giuliani until November 17th, while negotiations over the NAFTA treaty were going on; he had been reminded, perhaps, that he would have to work with Republicans as well as with Democrats. Clinton told Giuliani that it would be a good start that they had a friend in common, Bobby Wagner—who had died two days before. Early in December, Giuliani had a forty-minute White House meeting with Clinton. By mid-December, he seemed to have become the President's new mayoral favorite, and was approvingly cited in Clinton appearances for his proposal that Americans who want to carry guns should be subject to federal licensing, extensive background checks, and training in the use of guns as is done in the case of automobiles.

MANY New Yorkers, among them those running both the Dinkins and the Giuliani campaigns, had concluded after the 1989 election that the Republican candidate lost because he came across as a scary, law-and-order kind of character. The plan of his 1993 media consultant, David Garth (who has now run six of the last eight successful New York mayoral campaigns), was to present Giuliani as one of the nicest fellows a voter would ever want to meet, while the Dinkins forces naturally encouraged voters to see him as scarier than ever. In the final days of the campaign, the Mayor himself kept boosting the impression that his opponent favored putting as many people as possible in jail or, if he couldn't manage that, shooting them down. "I'm running for mayor, he's running for warden," Dinkins kept repeating, and he hit an even more strident note by adding, "His idea of gun control is target practice."

By 1 A.M. on Election Night, it became clear that the election was over, and the ugliness ended, at least for a few days. Unlike Governor Mario Cuomo and, to a degree, Clinton, Dinkins does not write his own speeches. When it came time to concede, he turned to his staff people in his Sheraton New York headquarters. "You got a concession speech?" he asked. They said they did. It had been written the day before by Eli Attie, a young Harvard graduate (he is now twenty-six) who joined the local government four years ago as a member of the city's Urban Fellowship program, and later signed on as a Dinkins speechwriter.

The atmosphere at the Dinkins headquarters had been optimistic, and Attie found it painful to put together words that might be needed if the worst should happen. On Election Night, Peter Johnson, a thirty-four-year-old lawyer and an informal adviser to Dinkins, contributed to the speech a part urging the crowd to hold hands and pray together. He and Attie wanted to add some appropriate words that Johnson thought he remembered from St. Francis of Assisi, but in the rush they could not find them. Afterward, neither of them suggested that the speech was theirs, not the Mayor's. "It was the Mayor as he really is," Attie said. The Mayor read the speech in a strong voice, asking his supporters to stand with their next mayor as partners—a partnership that he said Giuliani had earned. "We must reject the notion that what has happened today is anything other than a fair and forthright call for change," he said. "You see, my friends, elections come and go, candidates come and go, mayors come and go, but the life of the city must endure." In the next few days, numerous local editorials praised the Mayor for what was seen as his eminently worthy *ave atque vale* to political life. The columnist Liz Smith joined the chorus for national readers. "People . . . are still talking about Mayor David Dinkins' graceful, forceful, stirring concession speech," she wrote. "It's too bad David couldn't have presented himself like that throughout the campaign—not to mention his four years in office." ♦

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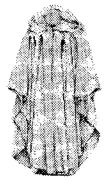

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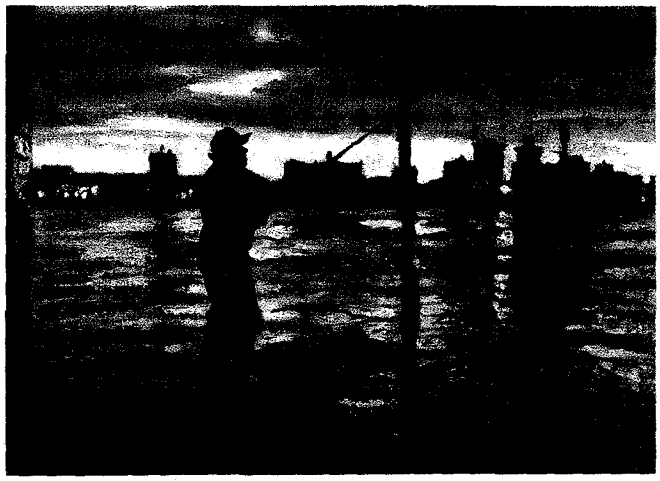
THE SPORTING SCENE

ON URBAN SHORES

In the middle of the night, from East River piers to Jersey beaches, anglers go in search of the striped bass.

BY IAN FRAZIER

My friend Tim and I used to hit golf balls into the water from the shoreline of lower Manhattan. Tim ordered the balls by the gross, used, from a golfing magazine; they had scuffs, smiles, spray-painted dots, and legends like "Tri-County Challenge—'80" and "Lost by Dan Trivino" and "Molub-Alloy The Metallic Lubricant" and "Maintenance Supply Co. Huntersville N.C." We told ourselves we were working on our drives. All we needed was a place open to the water; usually, we could find cracks in the asphalt or concrete big enough to fit a tee. We picked our targets. Once, I tried to land a ball on a mattress going out with the tide on the East River. I didn't succeed, but it would have been cool if I had. Once, I bounced a flat, hard drive off the stone base of the nearer tower of the Manhattan Bridge. A following shot struck the inside of an immense, upreaching I-beam, ricocheted to the opposite inside, then sped diagonally down into the water. Tim hit a beauty across a dredged inlet by a construction site at Battery Park City, the ball socking into a distant pile of sand and burying itself in a small landslide. One that he aimed at a passing container ship fell just short of the hull with a white exclamation point of a splash.



ALICIA CZECHOWSKI

My best shot came from a pier on the Lower East Side one winter morning with five inches of snow on the ground. Placing the ball on snow had a psychological effect on me, and I hit perfect drive after perfect drive. A cargo ship came along, well out in the channel. I took careful aim, kept my head down, and stroked one of those unstoppable balls that seem to rise like music, octave by octave—would it hit that glass housing near the bow? would they call the Coast Guard?—as the ship moved but not fast enough: ship and ball intersected, and a puff of snow came from a metal hatch cover amidships. Half a second later, we heard the impact's muffled clang. The name of the vessel was the John B. Carroll.

Just after dawn one day, we were hitting off an abandoned pier by Rutgers Slip, upstream from the Manhattan Bridge, when a little guy who had been sitting there on a folding metal chair came over and began to talk to us. Pointing to the water, he said, "See that? Those're anchovies. Like you put on pizza." Until then, I had never looked closely at the water of the East River—assuming the worst about it, I suppose—but now I observed that it was indeed full of silver-sided bait fish swirling and boiling like noodles in soup. The school was thick down as deep as you could see. The guy continued to talk about anchovies and other subjects as we continued to hit. He had a hand line with what looked like a piece of lime-green surgical tubing for a lure. When he left, he picked up from among some broken pallets a big striped bass he had caught. We had not noticed the fish before. He carried it off—to sell in Chinatown, he said—by a scrap of plastic packing rope strung through its mouth and gills.

Soon after that, we saw in the *Times* that the International Maritime Organization had issued a prohibition against ocean dumping of non-biodegradable plastics—a category that would include golf balls. To protect sea life, the ruling applied to all oceangoing vessels, and to cruise ships' profitable practice of selling golf balls for passengers to hit. We had suspected that what we were doing qualified as minor vandalism; now, thanks to the I.M.O., we were sure. So we stopped (there is now a net-enclosed driving range on one of the Hudson River piers we used to use), and I began to think more about the guy with the striped bass. I had read about stripers—the game fish that can grow to fifty or sixty pounds or more, the trophy species sought by thousands of oilskin-clad surf anglers, the voracious schooling fish that sometimes chase mullet and menhaden and tinker mackerel up onto the beach, the anadromous swimmer that lives most of its life in the ocean and spawns locally in the Hudson River—but I had never fished for them.

I began to scout up and down the shoreline in Manhattan on bright fall afternoons. At a rotted wooden pipe that had the appearance of a large barrel extending into the East River at Twentieth Street, I saw alewives nosing against moss-covered pilings. More bait appeared in the semi-clear water in sudden relief against the dark background of a drowned car seat. In fact, from Twenty-third Street all the way down to the tip of Corlears Hook, just south of Grand Street, the East River depths glinted with shifting schools of bait. All the books say that where there's bait there are stripers. I bought a nine-foot surf-casting rod and a spinning reel with twenty-pound-test line. I bought one-ounce white leadhead jigs with tails of white bucktail hair, and other lures. Stripers are known to move at dawn, to feed by first light. I woke up at four one morning and took the subway to Manhattan from my apartment, in Brooklyn—the first time I had ever approached a fish by going under it. "Striped bass," the token-booth clerk said when he saw my fishing rod. I rode with transit workers in orange-mesh vests carrying sacks of tokens and accompanied by armed guards, got off at the East Broadway stop, and walked down to the East River in the late night of Chinatown. A starling's raspy cry startled me. Police cars idled; clouds of steam from a steam tunnel crossed the street.

At the southern end of Corlears Hook Park is a graffiti-covered brick structure about the size of a shed, which extends into the river. The structure has no windows—only metal vents on two sides. Maybe it is part of an airshaft for an underwater tunnel. Warm air comes from the vents sometimes, and people who fish here call the structure the Heat House. A good cast from the Heat House's concrete apron can reach a tidal rip that forms on water ebbing around this corner of Manhattan Island. I set up my rod and tied on a lure by the light of a street light and went through a break in a chain-link fence. A man was sleeping on the concrete behind the Heat House, however, in the warm air from the vents. He had one shoe on, the other beneath his head. I moved to the walkway along the river upstream and began to fish there. The bottom of the river must be a cluttered spot—I hung up lure after lure. At first light, gulls began to fly by. I heard the rattle of shopping-cart wheels as a bottle-and-can-collecting guy appeared. The man behind the Heat House woke up and left, and I took his place. I was casting the bucktail jig about fifty yards to the tide rip, retrieving with short, quick pulls. Truck traffic on the Manhattan Bridge had slowed to a standstill, and on the bridge's lower level the bright beads of the D-train windows slid back and forth. Occasional passing barges sent wakes sloshing along the shore. The first jogger went by, singing tonelessly with his Walkman. At almost the moment of sunrise, about four minutes past seven, I felt a strong resistance on my line. I thought at first that I was hung up again. Then the resistance began to move. I pumped and reeled, gaining line. I still wasn't sure what I would pull out of there—an infant car seat, say, would have been only a mild surprise. But then the resistance was pulling, jerking. In the murky water I saw a flash of white, then stripes—a striper! It was about two feet long, and bent my rod

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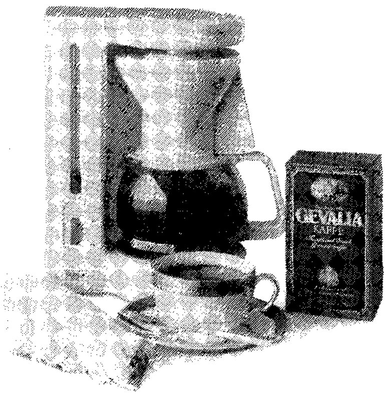

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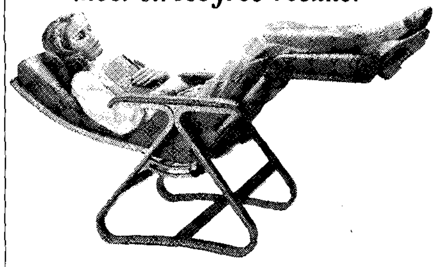

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double as I tried to hoist it out. Then there it was, slapping around on the concrete.

Striped bass are in many respects the perfect New York fish. They go well with the look of downtown. They are, for starters, pin-striped; the lines along their sides are black fading to light cobalt blue at the edges. The dime-size silver scales look newly minted, and there is an urban glint to the eye and a mobility to the wide predator jaw. If they could talk, they would talk fast. Although really big stripers take on a no-neck, thuggish, rectangular look, ones this size are classically proportioned—fish a child would draw. I unhooked mine and picked it up with both hands. All muscle, it writhed; a sharp spine of the dorsal fin went into my hand, and—thump, bump—the fish was back in the water and gone. A woman jogger doing leg-stretching exercises on the fence looked at me unsmiling, as if I were a fish abuser. Generally, when I fish I am in the woods, standing in weeds or mud or sand. Hauling a fish into the city like this made both city and fish more vivid—as if a striped bass had suddenly arrived flopping on my desk. A few casts later, I hooked another. It was about the same size but fought harder, and I had more trouble getting the hook out. Scales scraped off on the concrete as I held the fish down. I was too high up to reach the water, and so could not rinse the slime from my hands. I let the fish go; here a striper must be thirty-six inches long before you can keep it. (Also, because of the danger of contamination from PCBs and other chemicals, the State Department of Health recommends that people eat little or no fish caught in New York Harbor.) I broke down my rod and walked back to the subway and got home in time to take my daughter to school.

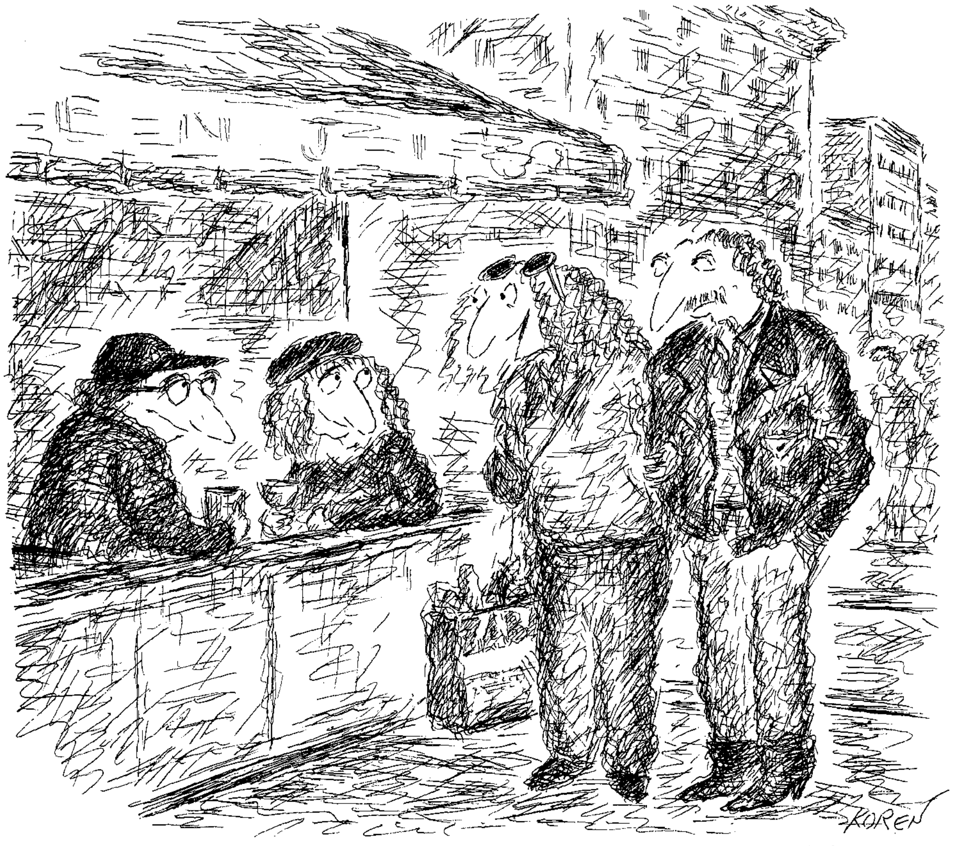
I WANTED to catch more and bigger stripers. I got striper fever. I read outdoor columns about stripers in newspapers and picked up angling newsletters in tackle shops and called recorded fishing tapes at a dollar forty-five a minute and talked to closemouthed striper anglers. In a tackle store in Bay Ridge, several striper anglers trading stories dropped their voices and leaned toward one another as I approached. Striper anglers have big, gill-like necks, wear clothing in layers, and yawn ostentatiously in daylight. They are famous for their divorce rate; the striper is a night creature, and its pursuers must be, too. I fished for stripers all this fall. Mostly, I went to Sandy Hook, the expanse of barrier beach bent like a crooked arm from the Jersey shore at the southern approach to New York Harbor. Sandy Hook is visible from Brooklyn, and from Sandy Hook you can see the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, the World Trade towers, and the sunrise on the windows of apartment buildings in Brighton Beach. People have caught many big stripers at Sandy Hook; it is among the prime striper-fishing grounds on the East Coast.

I knew nothing about fishing in surf. At first, it feels funny to park in a beach parking lot (Sandy Hook's beaches are all part of a national recreation area), put on chest waders, rig up, walk to an ocean stretching thousands of miles to Spain, and cast. My first day, I fished along the beach for several miles, using a swimming plug bigger than many trout I've been happy to catch. Casting it was hard work. I didn't know for sure how far into the ocean I should wade. A big wave knocked me down onto one arm. I climbed back on the beach and saw a sign in the distance. I thought perhaps it warned of dangerous surf. I walked over to it. It said:

ATTENTION.
BEYOND THIS POINT
YOU MAY ENCOUNTER
NUDE SUNBATHERS

The wind was blowing hard, lifting sand in smoky wraiths and rattling it against pieces of plastic trash. A half-buried strip of photographic film flapped rapidly with an industrial sound; it had dug a sharp-edged trench beside itself. The temperature was about fifty degrees—not nude-sunbathing weather. As I continued, however, I passed a trim bronze naked guy accompanying a clothed female, then a trio of old guys strolling along in hats, sweatshirts, dark glasses, sneakers, knee socks, and no pants. One guy said hello. I said hello back.

Mostly, I fished in the hours just before and after dawn. Sandy Hook, maybe twelve air miles from my apartment, is about an hour and a quarter away by car. I drove across Staten Island and through Jersey in light traffic, listen-



"Jack, here, is the most fascinating man I've ever met—he's in alcohol-abuse counselling, he goes to a sexual-harassment support group, he's in a race-relations workshop, and he spends every weekend in prison."

ing to radio programs with few commercials, sometimes following into a toll booth the four-wheel-drive vehicle of another striper angler. The millions in their beds on a full-moon night in October may not know that the beaches nearby are lined with hundreds of striper anglers, mostly men but some women, looking seaward as if awaiting an invasion. Darkness makes them more solitary. Anglers rig up by their cars' overhead lights and walk to the beach thirty feet apart in silence. I passed many anglers in the dark but never exchanged a word. When you can't really see the ocean, you hear it and smell it more. On clear mornings, dawn came up full and sudden, like houselights in a theatre, and the sun followed along behind. Venus was bright on the horizon to the northeast at 5 A.M. On cloudy mornings, dawn was dull, with occasional surprises: a red sun would pop up on the horizon, chin itself on a low ceiling of gray, and disappear for good; or, though the horizon stayed dark, silvery light would glisten on the water, and from a break in the clouds, celestially high, beams from the sunrise would spill down.

Sometimes the waves were like high hedges. Sometimes the sea just sat there and swayed; then, all of a sudden, a breaker would *whump* and the foam would be up under my arms. I cast and reeled, cast and reeled. A moment came when I could see my lure in the air as I cast, and a later moment when I could make out its succinct splash. The birds woke. If the tide was going out, gulls by the thousand occupied the exposed sand. A gull picked up a clam, dropped it to break the shell, failed, and kept on trying. Flocks of little gray-and-white shorebirds—sanderlings?—stayed right at the waves' edges. Long combers ran the birds back up the beach like the flat of a hand pushing crumbs. As waves rolled to the shore, they made white broken shells on the bottom hop up into them with a sort of vacuum-cleaner effect. Pieces of shells bounced from the waves' tops. I sometimes hooked a shell or a piece of clam but (at first) no fish of any kind. After full daylight, the anglers began to give up and came walking back to their cars. They wore yellow slickers, red-and-black checked hunting caps, camouflage coveralls, Penn State sweatshirts. At the ends of their lines dangled swimming plugs, popping plugs, rigged eels, sandworms, bloodworms, gobs of clams the size of baseballs. Some guys said the fish weren't here yet, or the mullet hadn't arrived to draw them, or the water was too murky or still too warm.

One morning, I brought peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches and bottled water, and stayed. By eight-thirty, along the whole expanse of beach I could see only one other angler. As I watched, his rod bent. I walked toward him and saw him land a big fish and let it go. When I got near, I began to cast. I had switched to the same leadhead jig that had worked in the East River; most of the white paint had been scraped off it by now. At once, I felt a hard, unmistakable hit, and the line went tight. Briefly, the fish took line, and, briefly, I hoped it would be big. The line was going right into the near-vertical side of a wave; at the base of a following wave I saw a swirl from the tail. I backed up the beach and slid the fish out of the foam and into a rivulet the ebbing tide had cut in the sand. It was a striper, good-sized but still not legal, hooked at the hinge of the jaw. I held it up and the other angler yelled, "Way to go!" I set it back in the surf.

At a tackle store in nearby Atlantic Highlands, amid sand spikes to hold rods on the beach, lead-loaded priests for clubbing fish, spiked cleats for climbing on jetties, bottles of fish scent to spray on lures, basins of wildly wriggling eels, and snapshots of stripers bigger than a six-year-old child, I talked to a veteran striper angler named Frank. He worked there and had caught some of the fish in the pictures. He gave me a number of tips, among them the fact that stripers love bad weather—the worse the weather, the more the stripers like it. As a result, one afternoon I fished in a storm that descended from the north, covering the city and its lights like a fire blanket. I had to adjust my hat to the tightest fit, and when the rain hit my eyes it hurt. Wind blew spray from the wave crests like dust behind a car, and it rolled pieces of foam along the sand, where they dwindled in a blink. Whitish-brown foam covered the sea farther out than I could cast. Near some sunken rocks, I lost a lure, and accidentally put my next cast in the same spot. Reeling in fast to stay off the bottom, I felt a hard tug. The line started moving up the beach, I went with it, and the next thing I knew I had a striper on the sand at my feet. I hardly looked at it, in all the rain and spray: it was like something blown in by the storm, like a fish left in somebody's pants after a dousing in a cartoon. And, unfortunately, it was another "short," as the striper anglers call them. The bells of a buoy clanged and clanged. On the dim horizon, in the Ambrose Channel, a three-masted sailing ship in silhouette slowly headed for New York.

THE striped bass never did show up in any numbers in the surf at Sandy Hook this fall, as near as I can tell. Striper anglers stood in the parking lots with their waders folded down around their middles and groused. Guys trudging back from the surf through the beach-plum bushes had similar expressions of frustration. A few talked about last year, or another year, and how the stripers were chasing bunkers in the wash at their feet, how the bluefish ate until the bait was coming out of their mouths, how some mornings every guy came home with a fish. This year, striper fishing was said to be good in the surf at Montauk, and in Staten Island Bay, and at Cape May, farther south in Jersey. But not, for some reason, here.

Striper season on the coast of New Jersey remains open all winter. The wind was blowing trash cans around on my street the last time I went out. On the Verrazano Bridge at 4 A.M., the car felt like a plane flying in turbulence. Street signs were shaking back and forth and flashing their reflections. As soon as I turned onto the road that runs along Sandy Hook, salt spray began to streak the windshield. I drove slowly down to Parking Area F, and as I got close my headlights picked out the waves lurching from the dark like shrouded beings in a horror movie. They were mobbing the beach: there was no beach—just waves breaking so fast as to have no rhythm at all. The wind was trying to shout them down. I walked to take a closer look, and a speedy long surge chased me back. I decided I wanted to be in the car. As I backed out, a comber broke over the sand barrier and came down into the parking lot. I turned up the car heater and headed for home. People say the stripers will return again in May. ♦

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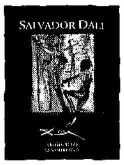

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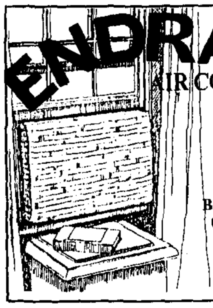

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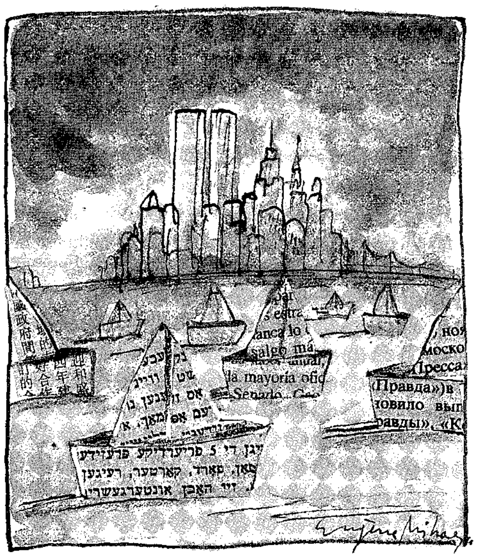
OUR LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS

NEWS IN A DYING LANGUAGE

If New York's newspaper publishers want to win over the city's new residents, they might benefit from a few Yiddish lessons.

BY DAVID REMNICK

FOR one naïve and splendid moment last spring, the newspaper romantics of New York believed they had a chance to claim the *Post* as their own. While lawyers piled up fortunes haggling over who would own the paper and who would owe what to whom, reporters in the riverfront newsroom paced nervously on a carpet the color of dried blood. "I hate this," one reporter, Colin Miner, said. "I just want to get back to dead bodies and chalk lines." Miner was young and had been only recently hired, but he had thoroughly inhaled the spirit of South Street. Meanwhile, Pete Hamill, the momentary editor of the paper and its would-be Lord Byron, sat near his office window and watched a loaded barge glide into the spidery shadows cast by the Brooklyn Bridge.



EUGENE MIHAESCO

"You wanna know what I think would be God's paper?" Hamill said, rising from his chair. (He was then assuming that the *Post* might be his to reinvent.) "It would be a tabloid that's smart and hip, knowing. The tone of Rupert Murdoch's papers was always naïve, like 'Holy Shit! They're Having Sex!' You can have classic tabloid sex and violence, but better, well written, and accurate. God's paper would have a coalition of audiences. We'd appeal to Koreans, Chinese, Japanese, Dominicans, Ecuadoreans, Haitians—the new immigrants. That's New York's future salvation. Anyone who still reads a newspaper is part of an aspiring class—the people who aren't zonked out yet on 'Wheel of Fortune.' We'd try to get the kids of the immigrants, the first generation of English-speakers. Cover immigration. Have a green-card columnist. Make a feature section. Cover the streets. Even the foreign stuff would reflect the community. Cover the best murder trial in Tel Aviv. Get into the Caribbean. The paper's got to reflect the city more accurately than by just having drug dealers and guys in handcuffs plastered across the front page."

Hamill, who had made a career as a columnist by evoking a chiaroscuro New York of noble pugs and clubhouse hacks, was dreaming. And, what was more, he knew it. From the beginning, Rupert Murdoch had been the only participant in the negotiations with the will and the means to win the *Post*, and he would never hand the paper over to the likes of Hamill. It was depressing, then, to hear the cheer go up in the newsroom when it was finally announced that the owner of the *Post* would indeed be Rupert, Redux. Some jobs had been saved (though not Colin Miner's), but the *Post* would go on as a cynical paper—a right-wing feuilleton for the city's conservatives and an object of high camp for the rest. Still, it had been fine to hear a newspaperman dream, if only for a little while.

Just before Hamill gave way to the inevitable, he'd said he thought that one of the greatest models for any other newspaper was the *Forverts*, the *Jewish Daily Forward*. Like most Irish Catholics of his generation, Hamill's fluency in Yiddish was limited to words for sandwich meats and forms of human stupidity: it was the idea of the *Forward* he was responding to—the *Forward* as the king of New York's ethnic newspapers. For more than a hundred and fifty years, publishers in New York have put out papers to capture the new arrivals at Ellis Island and Castle Garden and J.F.K. as they stood blinking into the sun, starved for news and instruction. The best of those papers have been immigration primers, guides to the mysteries and manners of the New World. Signs of the old immigrations persist. *France-Amérique*, which began publication in 1828, is hanging on, if barely, and so is the *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung* (1834). *Il Progresso* (1880) folded in 1989, having been overtaken by a new Italian daily, *America Oggi*. (Ethnic papers have a way of breeding before they die. *Staats-Zeitung* was the Teutonic seedling from which the Ridder half of the Knight-Ridder chain bloomed, while the publishers of *Il Progresso*, at one time a pro-Mussolini paper, begat the old New York *Enquirer*, which begat the *National Enquirer*.) In all, there are more than a hundred ethnic papers in around thirty languages published in the city, and while it is sad that there are no longer, say, eight important Chinese papers, it is remarkable that there are still four. There are also papers published in Arabic, Armenian, Creole, Estonian, Hungarian, Korean, Latvian, Norwegian, Romansh, and Tagalog.

The *Forward*, which was founded in 1897, is not the oldest, but it is the model, the exemplar. At the peak of its influence, in the twenties, its circulation exceeded a quarter of a million, and in 1947 its fiftieth anniversary was celebrated at Madison Square Garden. It was once so powerful a paper that it helped engineer the election of a Socialist, Meyer London, to Congress. (That happened in 1914.) But no more. The *Forward* has been a weekly for a decade, and, having reached the age of ninety-six, it will count itself lucky if it can celebrate its centenary. It is written in a dying language for a geriatric population. Circulation is sclerotic, fourteen thousand being the official, and highly generous, assessment. Mordecai Strigler, a diminutive scholar with thick glasses and titanic energy, who is the present editor, has so much trouble finding writers able to communicate in Yiddish that he often writes half the paper himself. Over a period of forty years, he has used about thirty pseudonyms, A. Kore (A Reader), A. Ben-Ami (Son of the People), M. Ragil (A Simple Person), and Z. Kamai (An Old-Fashioned Man) among them. The most reliably generous section of the paper is the obituaries. Such is the state of Yiddish. In her story "Envy, Or Yiddish in America" Cynthia Ozick wrote, "Of what other language can it be said that it died a sudden and definite death, in a given decade, on a given piece of soil?"

The *Forward* these days is the product of four full-time staff members. Strigler is seventy-two, and the three others—the managing editor, Joseph Mlotek; the contributing editor, Abraham Wilk; and the news editor, Jacob Goldstein—are even older. "I come in, and *here* someone is sick, *there* someone is sick, so I have to finish things on my own," Strigler told me one afternoon. He slumped in his chair and raised his brows, Yiddishly, toward Heaven. "What can I do?"

The *Forward's* offices are in the Workmen's Circle building, on East Thirty-third Street, a flavorless site compared with the former headquarters, down on East Broadway. (The old *Forward* building, with some of its Yiddish pediments still in place, is now a Chinese cultural center.) By newspaper standards, the offices are quiet and trig. They reflect the prim neatness of the aged. But the modern era does intrude. Management has replaced the old Linotype machines with Apple computers and Yiddish software. And although the paper has a tradition of left-leaning secularism, the typesetters are Orthodox, since it is the Orthodox, and especially the Hasidim, who keep Yiddish alive as a language of daily conversation. (Hebrew, the sacred tongue, is usually reserved for prayer and religious scholarship.)

"The older people don't want to hear it when you say it's all dying," Strigler told me recently. "The Lubavitcher Hasidim speak Yiddish, but they don't want to read our writing. They have their own separate world—even their own paper, *Algemeiner Journal*. I don't know who I'm writing for anymore. Maybe two hundred younger people read us. But they are passive. They are not in the conversation. They are only observers of this old world. My daughter tries now to learn Yiddish. She is twenty-five. She's very interested. But if she and her generation will be readers of our newspaper I don't believe it. It's too late, because there are pockets of speakers but they don't have what to do. If they can be a rabbi or a lawyer, what have they to do with us?" Fortunately for Yiddish, Strigler's energy is legion. He edits the *Forward* in the morning and then walks to another office, in Chelsea, to put together a distinguished Yiddish-language magazine of politics and culture, the biweekly *Yiddisher Kemfer* (The Fighter). It is as if one man were running (and largely writing) both the *Times* and *The New York Review of Books*.

Like so many of his colleagues and his readers, Strigler has led the epic life of a survivor. Born near the Polish city of Lublin, he was ordained as a rabbi when he was sixteen. As a teacher in Warsaw, he was thrown into the crucible of the war with Germany. When the Nazis broke through the barricades with their tanks, the Poles pointed to him and said, "Jew." The Nazi soldiers hauled Strigler off to a concentration camp, and carved swastikas into his cheeks and forehead with a razor blade. Over the next five years, he was sent from one concentration camp or slave-labor camp to another. He lost his parents and four of his sisters in the Holocaust. In 1945, an American journalist and writer named Meyer Levin went to the Buchenwald camp after it was liberated, and there he interviewed Strigler for what became the book "In Search." Strigler described how he managed, mostly through sheer luck, to survive to the end of the war. He talked of how Nazi soldiers beat him and confiscated his manuscripts, how he saw them order people shot as unfit because of the slightest blemish. After a roundup of Jews in the Lublin area, "our camp was put on the march," Strigler said. "We had to go fifteen miles, in a column ten abreast. They told us to run, and they rode alongside the column and fired into it all the time, our comrades dropped around us, and we filled up to ten abreast and ran, and they shot, shot, shot." Once they had been herded into the Ishbitza ghetto, about thirty miles away from Lublin, a mass, orgiastic slaughter began. "I saw a German officer go up and look over a pretty little girl of thirteen who had just been taken off a train. Then he calmly took out his bayonet knife and ripped up her belly. I saw this.”

Strigler has always been a remarkably prolific writer. Even now, he is capable of writing a dozen articles a week on topics as various as Israel, New York politics, Biblical commentary, and the fate of Yiddish. But after he was released from Buchenwald he moved to Paris, and there he wrote as if truly possessed, spinning out a vast cycle of semifictional books on the Holocaust, which were among the first eyewitness accounts of horror: “Maydanek,” in 1947; “In Di Fabrikn Fun Toyt” (“In the Factories of Death”), in 1948; “Verk ‘Tse’ ” (“Plant C”), in 1950; and “Goyroles” (“Destinies”), in 1952. In 1953, he came to America, and he has worked here as a journalist in the Yiddish world ever since. Late in 1986, he became the editor of the *Forward*, succeeding the late Simon Weber. He does not wish to be its last editor, but that could turn out to be the case.

“A few years ago, I went out and tried to find an apprentice, but it was impossible,” Strigler said. “To tell you the truth, I am sure in a year or two I will not be here. Maybe I’ll go to Israel. My wife was a teacher at Hebrew University, and I don’t know how long we’ll stay here. They tell me that I can’t move to Israel, that I’m the last one that can edit the paper. That’s what they tell me.” Harold Ostroff, the general manager of the Forward Association, which runs the paper, does all he can to cajole Strigler into staying. When I asked Ostroff if he would be able to find a replacement, he said, “There may be someone in this world. I don’t see anyone in America.” The decline of writers and of the circulation is so profound, Ostroff said, that he was already thinking about going monthly, if need be.

EVEN in its dotage, the *Forward* must evoke in the greatest newspaper dynasties (to say nothing of Murdoch, of the *Post*, or Mortimer Zuckerman, of the *News*) a sense of awe. The *Forward* grew out of an immigration of more than two and a half million Jews from Eastern Europe between 1881 and 1925—an immigration that rivals the current influx of Dominicans and Chinese, and one that forever shaped the texture of New York life. The demand for Yiddish publications in New York was so great that by 1914 more than a hundred and fifty daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, and occasional journals were appearing.

Abraham Cahan, an editor of literary genius and imperious character, ruled the *Forward* in its golden decades—the first half of this century. Cahan had grown up in academic and revolutionary circles in Lithuania, and after he arrived in the United States, in 1882, he made a literary name for himself even before the *Forward* came into being. In 1895, he published a realistic novella of Jewish life on the Lower East Side. The headline over William Dean Howells’ review of “Yekl, a Tale of the New York Ghetto,” in the New York *World*, read, “THE GREAT NOVELIST HAILS ABRAHAM CAHAN, THE AUTHOR OF ‘YEKL,’ AS A NEW STAR OF REALISM, AND SAYS THAT HE AND STEPHEN CRANE HAVE DRAWN THE TRUEST PICTURES OF EAST SIDE LIFE.” Cahan worked for four years at English-language newspapers, most notably with Lincoln Steffens at the *Commercial Advertiser*, covering murders, fires, Ellis Island, and the exploits of Buffalo Bill. By the time he settled at the *Forward*, in 1901, he had in mind a unique paper: one that would be a mix of *shund* and *literatur*—sensationalism and seriousness. He printed feature stories about the prostitutes on Allen Street and the peddlers on Delancey Street. He provided instructions in how to use a handkerchief, when to say “Pardon me,” how to get along with the neighbors in a communal apartment. He advised parents to feed their children fresh fruits and vegetables. He ran a contest in which readers were asked for the best definition of the word *mazel* (“luck”), and printed a seminal front-page story headed “THE FUNDAMENTALS OF BASEBALL EXPLAINED TO NON-SPORTS,” which was accompanied by a helpful diagram of the Polo Grounds. At the same time, he printed fiction, essays, and poems by all the great names in Yiddish literature—an accomplishment that was celebrated when Isaac Bashevis Singer, who had first published almost all of his fiction in the *Forward*, won the Nobel Prize, in 1978.

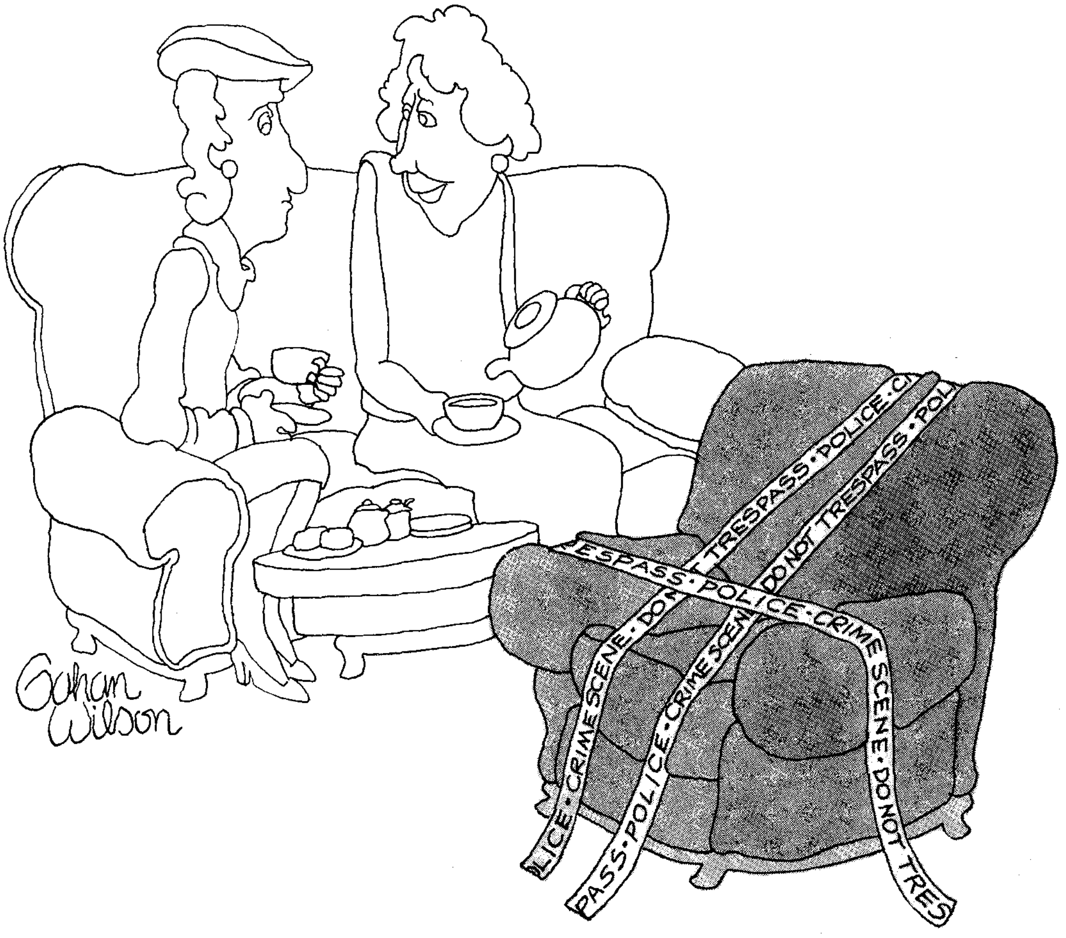
The *Forward* under Cahan, Ronald Sanders wrote in his 1969 book “The Downtown Jews,” was “a kind of running Talmudic text for the secular cultural life of the Yiddish-speaking masses.” Cahan was their secular rabbi, helping them ease their way into the New World. By far the paper’s most popular feature was called “A Bintel Brief” (“A Bundle of Letters”), in which readers gave voice to their most personal concerns and posed plaintive questions. Cahan had pleaded with his readers to “send us *emmeser romanen*”—true-life novels—and the readers responded with remarkably vivid descriptions of tenement life and spiritual confusion. The column, readers said, was like a combination of Dear Abby and Talmudic argument. One worried young woman wrote, “Is it a sin to use face powder? Shouldn’t a girl look beautiful? My father does not want me to use face powder. Is it a sin?” Elsewhere, mothers living in bleak poverty wondered if they should put their children up for adoption.

When the occasion demanded it, Cahan was also able to mobilize a skilled group of reporters to cover the news at least as well as the city’s English-language papers. On March 25, 1911, a huge fire broke out at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company, a ten-story loft near Washington Square. The fire raged through the top three floors, where hundreds of girls and young women worked at their sewing machines. Fire engines arrived within ten minutes, but they could do little to stop the blaze. The water from their hoses reached only to the seventh floor and their ladders only to the sixth. Under the headline “THE MORGUE IS FULL OF OUR DEAD,” the poet and *Forward* reporter, Morris Rosenfeld, pieced together an astonishing account of the tragedy:

> Forlornly [the crowd on the street] stood and watched as one girl after another fell, like shot birds, from above, from the burning floors. The men held out a longer time, enveloped in flames. And when they could hold out no longer, they jumped, too. Below, horrified and weeping, stood thousands of workers from the surrounding factories. They watched moving, terrible, unforgettable scenes. At one window on the eighth floor appeared a young man with a girl. He was holding her tightly by the hand. Behind them the red flames could be seen. The young man lovingly wrapped his arms around the girl and held her to him a moment, kissed her, and then let her go. . . . A moment later he leaped after her, and his body landed next to hers. Both were dead.

There were a hundred and forty-six dead, all told, and a hundred thousand people marched in a mass funeral ceremony.

Cahan was widely criticized among more religious and more intellectual Yiddish editors as a philistine bent on


POLICE · CRIME SCENE · DO NOT TRESPASS
Gahan Wilson

"So, did you hear about all the excitement?"

driving his audience into assimilation. And they were right: the *Forward* under Cahan was indeed a powerful instrument of assimilation. These days, Strigler and his colleagues like to say, with a sigh, that perhaps the paper did its job so well that it has put itself nearly out of business. The *Forward*, like the language itself, is in its preservationist stage. Aaron Lansky, a remarkable young man who in 1989 won a MacArthur "genius" award for rescuing hundreds of thousands of Yiddish books, told me, "My grandfather was a junkman in Fall River, Massachusetts, and he depended on the *Forward* for news. Who does that anymore? I'm afraid I can't think of anyone I know who reads it regularly, even in my circle of Yiddishists. Maybe this tells the whole story. The Hasidim speak Yiddish, but they will not read modern, secular Yiddish literature. To them, it is heretical. One night, I got a call from a Brooklyn collector who told me I had to come right away to Brooklyn, to Brighton Beach, to something called the Beth Am Center, an old Zionist labor center that was now being sublet to the Orthodox as a yeshiva. He had discovered that when the Orthodox moved in they found a library of fifteen thousand Yiddish books and threw them all down the cellar stairs. When we came to get the books, the Orthodox just glowered at us. For them, those books were heretical, because they discussed how Jews might live in a modern world. It is a great irony that the last Jews who speak Yiddish will not read these great books, let alone the *Forward*."

I DOUBT if there is any one paper in New York that is a worthy successor to the *Forward*. The *Novoye Russoye Slovo* (*New Russian Word*), which is the leading paper in Brighton Beach, is distinctively Russian, with its passion for long opinion pieces, but it lacks the flair of the best Moscow papers. *El Diario-La Prensa* is the leading Spanish-language paper, with a circulation of fifty thousand, and features a broad range of opinion pieces, from conservative attacks on Fidel Castro to liberal pieces on Central and South America. But by trying to be an umbrella paper for all the Hispanic groups in the city it shows how radically different the interests of the city's Cubans and Puerto Ricans, Dominicans and Colombians are. The various groups are often better served by the imported papers available in Hispanic neighborhoods and at stores like Hotaling's, just off Times Square, that specialize in out-of-town publications. Caribbeans, too, have New York-based papers, but the imports, like the *Gleaner*, from Jamaica, are more popular.

Perhaps the most ambitious and among the wealthiest of the ethnic papers is the *World Journal*, which is a daily financed by a Taiwan conglomerate and is the leading Chinese-language paper in the country. Tih-Wu Wang, the Citizen Kane of the conglomerate, is a gigantic figure in Taipei. A former member of Chiang Kai-shek's military, he traded on his political and business connections to build a chain of papers in both Taiwan and North America. "The legend is he used to deliver his papers on a bicycle at the start, and now he might as well have a license to print money," Justin Yu, the *World Journal's* immigration and crime reporter, told me over a long lunch one afternoon on Mott Street. "Mr. Wang comes on Chinese New Year and holds a banquet at the Sheraton he owns, near LaGuardia. Everyone gets an envelope with a bonus."

T. W. Wang is in his eighties and is sitting on a fortune. Taiwan sources say that years ago he bought a mountain on the island, and on that mountain he built a palace, and in that palace he built a glass floor with gold carp swimming underneath. It was a pretty effect, but this Xanadu made some squeamish local politicians very unhappy all the same, because it seemed to them an unnecessary flaunting of wealth. Soon it was announced that the estate would become a vacation center for employees. "Mr. Wang is a great story," Justin Yu said. "He even thought about buying the *Daily News*. But the American market is just a chicken leg compared to what he wants. It's peanuts compared to China."

For the *World Journal*, which was founded in 1976, the story that ranks in importance with the Triangle Shirtwaist fire was the tragedy of the Golden Venture, the freighter that ran aground on the beach at Far Rockaway last June loaded with hundreds of Chinese. Justin Yu and his partner, Alex Peng, covered the story with speed and grace, not least because they had been following the nuances and cruelties of illegal immigration from China to New York for years. Justin, who tends to do most of his phone work and writing while he is sitting at a small table at the back of his wife's toy store, in Chinatown, told me, "All the illegals come through the store. When someone comes into the toy store to buy a toothbrush, I know he's illegal and green, right off the boat. I get all my stories that way. One guy told me how he got to Houston via Mexico via Belize and how soldiers escorted him across the Rio Grande. They took a small airplane from Mexico to the desert and were met by a minivan and driven eight or nine hours to Los Angeles. Then they came here because there are no Fukinese in Los Angeles. The Fukinese own the bad carryout places. You know, the homeless live on that two-dollar fried rice the Fukinese make."

Alex Peng makes his reporting rounds driving an old Lincoln and wearing two beepers on his belt. Husky and intense, he is sometimes described as the Chinese Jimmy Breslin. Peng doesn't resent the label, despite Breslin's outburst a couple of years ago when he called a Korean-American colleague at *Newsday* "slant-eyed" and a "yellow cur." Peng said, "I fully understand that Jimmy Breslin's reputation is no good among Asians, but he is an energetic, dynamic journalist. I learned a lot from him, just by reading. He is always there, and that's a rule: You gotta be there, you always go. If you sit in the office and work the phone, you get another kind of story."

New York's Chinatown is no longer limited to lower Manhattan, and one day recently Alex and I were in the Queens division, in Flushing, where many of the most prosperous Asians—from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Korea—have settled. (Country folk from China itself are more likely to live in the overcrowded apartments in Manhattan.) Alex switched on a tape of one of his favorite singers, Engelbert Humperdinck, gunned the engine, and hummed lightly. I told him about the letters that used to appear in the *Forward's* "Bintel Brief"—letters from parents who feared that their children were losing their Yiddish and their ties to Jewish culture.

"Yeah, sure. We get letters like that," he said. "Like 'My children won't go to weekend Chinese school and can't talk Chinese. What should I do?' Or 'My kids won't eat Chinese food. What should I do?' Nothing changes."

The *World Journal* publishes service information for immigrants, just as the *Forward* did—information on how to apply for a Social Security card, where to register to vote, where to collect your car if it has been towed, the schedule of the public libraries. But where the *World Journal* falls short is in its lack of independence. According to some members of the Chinese-speaking community, none of the Chinese papers in New York have shown that they are able to write in detail about, for example, the dominance of the Tongs of organized crime. The *World Journal* and the three other Chinese papers—the Hong Kong-financed *Sing Tao*, the local *United Daily*, and the Beijing-sponsored *China Press*—all tend to skip lightly over areas considered too delicate to mention. When unionized waiters at the Silver Palace, a vast dim-sum emporium on the Bowery, picketed the restaurant last August because the owners wanted to cut their health insurance and take a percentage of the tips, the papers responded with minimal, euphemistic coverage. Because nearly all the other waiters in Chinatown are not even unionized, and because the Tongs are so deeply involved in the restaurant business, the case had enormous importance for the community. It fell largely to the English-language press to cover the story.

Such limited coverage doesn't seem to bother even the best of the *World Journal's* reporters—or not enough, at least. "News is business," Alex said. "Keep that in mind. Don't position yourself as a gatekeeper or a social

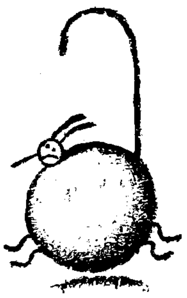
conscience. Of course, we talk about all that, but news is business. If there is no profit, why you wanna do that? You are not the Salvation Army. C'mon, gimme a break!"

As we drove on through Flushing, Alex said that, like the editors of the *Forward*, he and his colleagues who grew up speaking and reading Chinese see their own children becoming Americanized. They can speak and understand Chinese but not read it. The *World Journal* will not be their paper. They, too, will drift toward the *News*, the *Post*, the *Times*, and, most of all, to television. "We're not counting on the younger generations to be our readers, but we have the confidence that we will always be a bridge for the newcomers," Alex said. "My kids seem to pick up their language from TV and the street. The other day, my four-year-old called me a schmuck. What language is that?"

In the end, one of the papers that seemed most promising on my search through the city's ethnic press was the English-language edition of the *Forward*. Started in 1990, it is a gigantic leap beyond much of the rest of the mainstream Jewish English-language press, which is generally so beholden to the Jewish charities for funding that it is no less cautious than *World Journal* and *Sing Tao;* the slant is often so acute that one anticipates the millennium headline "WORLD ENDS YESTERDAY; JEWS SUFFER MOST."

The idea for an English-language *Forward* had been drifting around the paper's offices ever since the other Yiddish papers in the city, like the *Tog* (the *Day*), began closing, in the early nineteen-seventies. But there was always resistance. What did English have to do with the *Forverts*? It was not until the early nineteen-eighties that someone came along who was ready to push the idea, and he was from outside the paper: Seth Lipsky, one of the leading writers and editors at the *Wall Street Journal*. Lipsky was an editor for the paper in Europe and Asia and also a member of its conservative editorial board. Like his mentor on the editorial page, Robert Bartley, he was, and still is, capable of writing in a mode just short of savagery. But, as happens with many editors easing into middle age—Lipsky is forty-seven—there came a time when he wanted his own show to run. The notion of an English *Forward* appealed to him more for reasons of the paper's history than out of any allegiance to *Yiddishkeit*. He is, of course, Jewish, but the extent of his attachment to religious custom was revealed to me one afternoon when we sent out for sandwiches. "Ham and cheese on rye, for me," he said. The *Forward*, Lipsky was quick to remind me, has always been a secular paper.

For years, Lipsky waged a campaign of noodging the *Forward* hierarchy—especially Simon Weber, who in 1970 had succeeded Abraham Cahan as editor, and who retained a great deal of influence at the paper even after Strigler became editor, at the end of 1986. Lipsky tried over and over again to convince the Forward Association that an English-language edition—not a mere translation but a separate entity—could one day turn a profit, and would almost certainly be a boon to Jewish journalism and learning. In advancing this cause, Lipsky visited Weber in the hospital, where the older man was recovering from a broken hip. "He was seventy-three, and in seventy-three years I don't think he'd ever heard an idea that he regarded as quite as insane as mine," Lipsky told me. "The *Forward's* cause was secular Jewish language and literature, and along comes this kid from the *Wall Street Journal*."



The idea went nowhere until the spring of 1987, when Weber was in the hospital once more—this time with a general breakdown of his health. By then, Weber had taken a liking to Lipsky, a man of firm opinions ("I'm a hardheaded liberal, you might say") and tart good humor. There was an odd friendship between them, but the idea of an English *Forward* was still not moving ahead. This time, Lipsky was merciless.

"Si, look," he said. "You are on your deathbed, and in a matter of months you'll be gone. And, if you don't do something, your newspaper is going to be gone with you. So if you are not willing to receive my emissary for me you should be willing to receive him for the sake of the *Forward*. And I expect you to do it."

Weber was silent a long time. And then he said, with his inimitable Old World gutturals, "And *khooo* is this emissary?"

"It's Sam Pisar," Lipsky said.

Weber was impressed. "Pisar," he said. "He can make things khappen."

Pisar, an international lawyer and a survivor of Auschwitz, met with Weber and the members of the Forward Association in Weber's hospital room, and could see that some of them were receptive to the idea of an English paper. They agreed to receive Lipsky.

"I came back from China to New York at my own expense," Lipsky said, recalling the meeting. "We met on a Saturday morning. I felt like Judge Bork going before the Senate Judiciary Committee. Everything was friendly, O.K., and then Sam turns to me and says something that made me realize why he's so brilliant. He said, 'Seth, they don't want to know about the easy questions. They want to know about the difficult questions.'

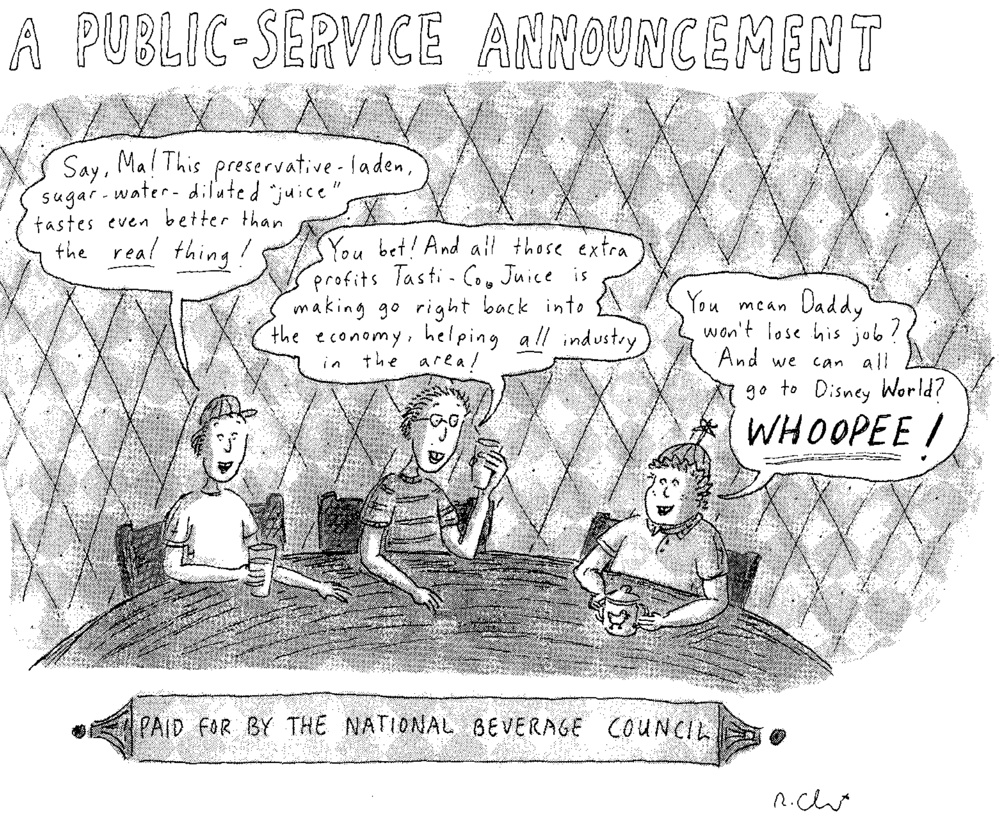
" 'Like what, Sam?' I said.

"And he said, 'Like Jabotinsky. Where are you on Jabotinsky?'

"A chill fell over the room. It was like walking into a meat locker. I knew right away that this was the most important moment of my life."

It might well be appropriate at this juncture to explain the significance of the chill in the room. It was Theodor Herzl who founded modern Zionism, from a centrist, assimilated, slightly left-leaning bent. His opponent in tactics and temperament was Vladimir Jabotinsky, a Russian newspaperman who believed (some have said believed fanatically) in an armed struggle to create Israel. Jabotinsky organized the Haganah self-defense movement and advocated a "greater" Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan River. When the state was formed, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion hung portraits on the wall of Herzl and Chaim Weizman. But when Menachem Begin took office, in 1977, he added one more portrait—that of Jabotinsky.

Lipsky went on, "So, finally, I said, 'I know how you feel about Jabotinsky and how he appeared to your generation. But to my generation—or, at least, to me, looking back—the outstanding fact of Jabotinsky's life is that he called for the evacuation of the Jews from Europe in


A PUBLIC-SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT
Say, Ma! This preservative-laden, sugar-water-diluted "juice" tastes even better than the real thing!
You bet! And all those extra profits Tasti-Co Juice is making go right back into the economy, helping all industry in the area!
You mean Daddy won't lose his job? And we can all go to Disney World? WHOOPEE!
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1932.' What I was trying to say was that I don't want to fight about the past, but if you really want to I'll try to get down and mud-wrestle with you. After that, the conversation returned to an amicable plane."

Lipsky's dream was not realized until the Forward Association had a financial windfall. For many years, the association had owned the radio station WEVD-FM, named in honor of the socialist leader Eugene Victor Debs. Known some time ago as "the station that speaks your language," WEVD featured programming in Yiddish, Russian, Ukrainian, Spanish, Greek, and Turkish. But with time some of those languages died out in the city, and some became so prevalent that they had their own stations. WEVD was, as a business, losing ground. Then, in 1989, the Spanish Broadcasting System decided it needed a New York flagship, a fifty-thousand-watt FM station. Not only did WEVD have the power but it was one of only thirteen stations with access to the transmission tower on the Empire State Building. The SBS and the Forward Association cut a deal. Harold Ostroff, who conducted the negotiations for the Forward Association, said that the total package should ultimately be worth sixty-five million dollars. Though much of the money will be a long time coming in, even a fraction of it was enough to make viable the idea of maintaining the Yiddish *Forward* while starting an English-language edition. Lipsky published his first issue on May 25, 1990.

To all who ask, Lipsky spins out a ditzy theory of how the English *Forward* could go from its current circulation, of thirteen thousand five hundred, to something five times, even fifteen times, as big. His fantasy, like Pete Hamill's dream of God's tabloid, is part mist, part ideology. "My theory about the newspaper market is that the billionaires circling the city look only at the tabloid flank, but the weak flank in New York is the *Times*," he said. "The *Times* was built on a constituency of hardheaded liberals—largely Jews, though not exclusively. That constituency is shrinking in stunning numbers. The proprietors of the *Times* have two choices: either shrink, which is not logical, or abandon their traditional constituency and purpose, and pursue a much more culturally diverse constituency—the African-Americans, the Hispanics. They are fine constituencies, but such a move will change the content of the *Times*. And that will leave only one broadsheet in New York in a position to focus on that original constituency of the New York *Times* and to grow, especially as a daily. And that will be the *Forward*."

At the instant my eyebrow lifted, Lipsky smiled.

"I see you are dubious of the proposition."

Perhaps so.

"Well, look at it this way," Lipsky went on. "You have seventeen hundred dailies in America, and more than half of them have circulations under fifty thousand. A daily that takes in a profit can be sold for the price of a supertanker."

While Lipsky waits out that part of his dream, it is worth noting that the editorial contents of the English-language *Forward*—especially the aggressive news coverage and the sophisticated arts pages—are worthy of the Yiddish paper. From the start, Lipsky hired a range of quirky young talent, including one writer, Ilene Rosenzweig, whose previous employment had been with *Street News*, the paper of the homeless, and who is the author of "The I Hate Madonna Handbook." Recently, he hired as executive editor Lucette Lagnado, late of the *Post* and the *Village Voice*, where she was the "Urban Guerrilla" columnist. Lipsky and Lagnado have published some excellent pieces from Moscow, Washington, and Jerusalem as well as irreverent coverage of the world of Jewish politics and culture. There has been a string of fine articles by Jeffrey Goldberg, late of the Washington *Post* and the Israeli Defense Forces, on the feuds within the Lubavitcher Hasidic community, and investigative reports on alleged fraud in Orthodox communities regarding medical insurance and state educational grants. "We don't have any sacred cows, kosher or otherwise," Goldberg told me. "We want to cover the Jewish community as rigorously as the *Times* or the *News* covers City Hall. We don't have that not-in-front-of-the-goyim sensibility." According to associate editor Jonathan Rosen, the virtue of the Yiddish *Forward* is "that it took the imagination as seriously as news." So, too, with the English edition. The paper has run excerpts from Philip Roth's "Operation Shylock," David Rosenberg and Harold Bloom's Biblical study "The Book of J," and, in serial form, the second volume of Art Spiegelman's "Maus," the cartoon saga of the Holocaust and the relationship between the artist and his survivor-father which won a special Pulitzer Prize in 1992. Spiegelman, for his part, admires Lipsky's news columns—"Their anti-Semite watch is a good one, and they have a nice Diaspora beat." But he was astonished at the hawkish tone the editorial page took during the Gulf War. In despair, Spiegelman nearly pulled his strip, he said, "but the war ended too soon for me to act." No matter how conservative Lipsky may be on certain subjects, especially foreign affairs, his stewardship of the paper has been open and daring. Recently, he ran a column by writer and editor Philip Gourevitch resisting "the notion that American Jewish culture can be understood as a matter of neurosis, cuisine, and television sitcoms":

> Sadly, a large portion—I'd venture that it's close to 50%—of the material that comes in to this office for review or publication conceives of Jewishness as something defined from without by persecution or hostility. Sitting in this chair on a bad day, you might think that Jews had finally succumbed to Sartre's insulting suggestion that if people stopped hating us we would cease to exist. . . . Sadder still is the fact that many Jews seem to cherish their self-perception as victims. This is a common idiocy of our age, hardly unique to Jews: to seek one's value in one's devaluation by others. We are hated, so we must be great enough to warrant hatred, the thinking goes, we are a cause, and easy righteousness is on our side.

Gourevitch's article, which goes on to urge secular Jews to find their identity in learning and the traditions of Jewish culture, is just not the sort of thing you would expect to find in *Jewish Week* or *Hadassah*.

Whenever Lipsky is asked why he threw away a big-time career at the *Wall Street Journal* to edit the English-language *Forward*, he says, "I did it for the prestige." He told me, "It's true. These are serious thinkers here. The *Forward* has a Nobel Prize. So they're not terribly impressed with Lipsky. It was just a question of trying to rise to their level."

Visitors to the *Forward* office, however, notice that while the Yiddish and the English staffs work on the same floor, they hardly mix. (The segregation is social *and* editorial. Neither paper runs translated articles from the other.) There is a bit of a cultural gulf in their interests. There are no Talmudic scholars on the English side, and, next to some of his staffers, Lipsky is a regular Maimonides. At one meeting, the English staff was talking about Hanukkah, and a reporter could not follow the drift.

"What's a dreidel?" he asked.

Jonathan Rosen, a Yale graduate who has also served as cultural editor and executive editor, told me that, while the two sides come from different worlds, there is tremendous respect not only of the younger for the older but vice versa. The older generation is not the least bit deluded about the future of the Yiddish *Forward*, and hopes that the publication will go on, at least in English. "The *Forward* is a little like the State of Israel. It had a history, and now it has a history again," Rosen said. "I'll tell my parents' friends that I work for the *Forward* and their faces will beam, because they want so much to believe that Yiddish is being reborn. But Yiddish culture was disappearing even before the Holocaust. Shtetl life was changing. Lots of what we call Yiddish culture—films like 'The Dybbuk,' which was made in Poland in the thirties—was already a self-conscious re-creation. Not authentic, already romanticized. What looks to us like authentic old Yiddish culture was already being made in a twilight era."

Rosen went on, "The Yiddish *Forward* led a generation of American Jews into American life. Now they need to be led back to the sources of their culture. They have been born into ignorance—ignorance, not merely secularism. It's a little like the breakup of the Soviet Union. No one is Soviet anymore. You are Russian, Ukrainian. In the multicultural revolution, the notion of being American is not the same as it was. Jews have to discover that unless they embrace their identity they are not part of the equation. Jews are searching for an affiliation. Sometimes reading a newspaper can be an affiliation." ♦

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

E-MAIL FROM BILL

Bill Gates, the chairman of Microsoft, dominates the computer industry the way Henry Ford dominated the auto industry. And now that new technology is about to put us all on the information highway, Gates is in a unique position to shape the future—again. The rest of the communications industry, and the Justice Department, is watching.

BY JOHN SEABROOK

AT the moment, the best way to communicate with another person on the information highway is to exchange electronic mail: to write a message on a computer and send it through the telephone lines into someone else's computer. In the future, people will send each other sound and pictures as well as text, and do it in real time, and improved technology will make it possible to have rich, human electronic exchanges, but at present E-mail is the closest thing we have to that. Even now, E-mail allows you to meet and communicate with people in a way that would be impossible on the phone, through the regular mail, or face to face, as I discovered while I was working on this story. Sitting at my computer one day, I realized that I could try to communicate with Bill Gates, the chairman and co-founder of the software giant Microsoft, on the information highway. At least, I could send E-mail to his electronic address, which is widely available, not tell anyone at Microsoft I was doing it, and see what happened. I wrote:

> Dear Bill,
>
> I am the guy who is writing the article about you for The New Yorker. It occurs to me that we ought to be able to do some of the work through e-mail. Which raises this fascinating question—What kind of understanding of another person can e-mail give you? . . .
>
> You could begin by telling me what you think is unique about e-mail as a form of communication.
>
> John

I hit "return," and the computer said, "mail sent." I walked out to the kitchen to get a drink of water and played with the cat for a while, then came back and sat at my computer. Thinking that I was probably wasting money, I nevertheless logged on again and entered my password.

"You have mail," the computer said.

I typed "get mail," and the computer got the following:

> From: Bill Gates <billg@microsoft.com>
> Ok, let me know if you get this email.

According to my computer, eighteen minutes had passed between the time I E-mailed Bill and he E-mailed me back. His message said:

> E-mail is a unique communication vehicle for a lot of reasons. However email is not a substitute for direct interaction. . . .
>
> There are people who I have corresponded with on email for months before actually meeting them—people at work and otherwise. If someone isn't saying something of interest its easier to not respond to their mail than it is not to answer the phone. In fact I give out my home phone number to almost no one but my email address is known very broadly. I am the only person who reads my email so no one has to worry about embarrassing themselves or going around people when they send a message. Our email is completely secure. . . .
>
> Email helps out with other types of communication. It allows you to exchange a lot of information in advance of a meeting and make the meeting far far more valuable. . . .
>
> Email is not a good way to get mad at someone since you can't interact. You can send friendly messages very easily since those are harder to misinterpret.

We began to E-mail each other three or four times a week. I would have a question about something and say to myself, "I'm going to E-mail Bill about that," and I'd write him a message and get a one- or two-page message back within twenty-four hours, sometimes much sooner. At the beginning of our electronic relationship, I would wake up in the middle of the night and lie in bed wondering if I had E-mail from Bill. Generally, he seemed to write messages at night, sleep (maybe), then send them the next morning. We were intimate in a curious way, in the sense of being wired into each other's minds, but our contact was elaborately stylized, like ballroom dancing.

In some ways, my E-mail relationship with Bill was like an ongoing, monthlong conversation, except that there was a pause after each response to think; it was like football players huddling up after each play. There was no beginning or end to Gates' messages—no time wasted on stuff like "Dear" and "Yours"—and I quickly corrected this etiquette breach in my own messages. Nor were there any fifth-grade-composition-book standards like "It may have come to your attention that" and "Looking forward to hearing from you." Social niceties are not what Bill Gates is about. Good spelling is not what Bill Gates is about, either. He never signed his messages to me, but sometimes he put an "&" at the end, which, I learned, means "Write back" in E-mail language. After a while, he stopped putting the "&," but I wrote back anyway. He never addressed me by name. Instead of a letterhead, there was this:

```
Sender: billg@microsoft.com
Received: from netmail.microsoft.com
by dub-img-2.compuserve.com (5.67/
5.930129sam) id AA03768; Wed, 6 Oct
93 14:00:51 -0400
Received: by netmail.microsoft.com
(5.65/25-eef) id AA27745; Fri, 8 Oct 93
10:56:01 -0700
Message-Id: <9310081756.AA27745@
netmail.microsoft.com>
X-Msmail-Message-Id: 15305A55
X-Msmail-Conversation-Id: 15305A55
From: Bill Gates <billg@microsoft.com>
To: 73124.1524@CompuServe.COM
```

For years after the telephone was invented, in 1876, people thought it was a device that would transmit news, drama, and music: the idea that the telephone was a way to talk to other people took about twenty years to sink in here, and about thirty years in Europe. Similarly, today one hears about shopping, banking, and renting movies on the information highway. These are all possible ways of making money, of course, but the point of the information highway, it seems to me, is that it offers a new way of talking to other people. The trouble people have understanding this simple point is the same trouble people in the nineteenth century had understanding the telephone.

BILL GATES, aged thirty-eight, is one of the richest men in the country—the richest in 1992, and the second richest, after the investor Warren Buffett, in 1993, with a fortune of six billion one hundred and sixty million dollars, according to *Forbes*. Last March, when he announced his engagement to Melinda French, a twenty-nine-year-old manager at Microsoft, the news made the front page of the *Wall Street Journal*. Gates controls the computer industry to an extent matched by no other person in any other major industry. The Justice Department is currently trying to determine whether his control constitutes a monopoly. Microsoft now supplies eighty per cent of all the personal-computer operating-system software in the world—that is, the layer of software that translates your commands so that the computer can act on them—and fifty per cent of all the application software, which is the tools, like Microsoft Word (writing) and Excel (accounting), that run on top of the operating system. Microsoft uses its leverage in the operating-system market as a competitive advantage in the applications market—a practice that is not nice but is not necessarily illegal. "You could say, as I have said to Bill, that having achieved this much power you should turn your attention to being magnanimous," a rival software executive told me. "But Bill believes that now is not the time for statesmanship. Now is the time to conquer new foes, plunder new lands. He doesn't like being compared to John D. Rockefeller—he goes, 'Hey, I'm not a grasping monopolist, am I?'—but he doesn't know how to behave any other way. To hold war councils and to design strategies with the explicit aim of crushing an opponent—this is very American. You know, Mother Teresa is not going to build the broadband network of the future."

Recently, the wife of a software developer was listening to her husband describe for me what it was like to be in the same industry as Bill Gates: he was saying, in a pained but stoical way, that maybe Gates didn't have to be quite so competitive now that he had achieved great power, and that it might be better for the computer industry as a whole if he behaved in a more benevolent way, when his wife interrupted and said to me, "No. You don't understand. We talk about Bill Gates every night at home. We think about Bill Gates all the time. It's like Bill Gates lives with us." This enveloping sense of Bill Gates is hard for someone outside the computer industry to fathom. To people who are unfamiliar with computers, Gates is just a nerd, and if you try to get them to square the negative connotation of the word "nerd" with Gates' incredible success, and with the fact that, far from being on the margin of society, Gates is now in a position to determine what society is like, they're likely to say, "Well, I guess it really is the revenge of the nerds." Actually, Gates probably represents the end of the word "nerd" as we know it.

To many people, the rise of Bill Gates marks the revenge of the nerd. Actually, Gates probably represents the end of the word "nerd" as we know it.

ANDREW GEORGE

But all Gates' influence and success are small potatoes compared with the influence he could have and with the opportunity that now lies before him. The computer, which in twenty-five years has evolved from a room-size mainframe into a laptop device, appears to be turning into a new kind of machine. The new machine will be a communications device that connects people to the information highway. It will penetrate far beyond the fifteen per cent of American households that now own a computer, and it will control, or absorb, other communications machines now in people's homes—the phone, the fax, the television. It will sit in the living room, not in the study. The problem of getting people to feel comfortable with such a powerful machine will be partly solved by putting it inside one of the most unobtrusive objects in the house—the set-top converter, which is the featureless black box on top of a cable-connected TV set (the one the cat likes to sit on if the VCR is occupied).

Gates would like to have his software inside that box. Microsoft's ambition is to supply the standard operating-system software for the information-highway machine, just as it now supplies the standard operating-system software, called Windows, for the personal computer. Microsoft has two billion dollars in cash, and no debt, and is spending a hundred million dollars a year developing software for the new machine, which is a lot more than anyone else is spending. The plan is first to supply the software that allows people to rent videos over the TV and makes home shopping more attractive, and then to use money from the video-rental and home-shopping businesses to pay for the development of the rest of the software. Therefore, Gates is now meeting with people like Mike Ovitz and Barry Diller to discuss better ways of delivering their products into people's homes. "I actually requested a meeting with him," Ovitz told me last October. "I flew up to Seattle and we had dinner together and spent three or four hours just talking about the future."

"Could you say specifically what you talked about?"

"It was just very deep stuff about the future."

"Well, for example, did you talk about information-highway software?"

"It goes much deeper than that."

At Microsoft's main office, in Redmond, a suburb of Seattle, I saw a demo of an early version of the company's operating software for the information-highway machine, in which the user points at the TV screen with a remote control, clicks onto icons, and selects from menus. I heard a lot about "intelligent agents," which will at first be animated characters that occasionally appear in the corner of your TV screen and inform you, for example, that President Aristide is on "Meet the Press," because they know you're interested in Haitian politics, but will eventually be out there on the information highway, filtering the torrent of information roaring along it, picking out books or articles or movies for you, or receiving messages from individuals. As the agents become steadily more intelligent, they will begin to replace more and more of the functions of human intelligent agents—stockbrokers, postal workers, travel agents, librarians, editors, reporters. While I was at Microsoft, I sometimes felt like prey.

Gates' greatest disadvantage in this new market is that Microsoft doesn't own any wires into people's homes, nor does it have the computers installed to handle all the switching and billing that two-way communication requires. To solve this problem, Microsoft needs to make an alliance with a cable company or a telephone company, or both. Microsoft has an alliance with Intel Corporation, the world's leading manufacturer of microprocessors, and General Instrument, a maker of set-top converters, but it is not a very powerful alliance compared with Bell Atlantic's alliance with Tele-Communications, Inc., the largest cable company in the United States, or with U S West's alliance with Time Warner, the second-largest cable company. Gates is currently negotiating an alliance involving Time Warner and Tele-Communications, Inc.—a kind of granddaddy of all alliances, which would have the power to set the standard for the information-highway machine. A major issue in the negotiations will be the extent to which Microsoft would own the software in the machine. Gates would like to retain the rights to the software; Gerald Levin, the C.E.O. of Time Warner, and John Malone, the C.E.O. of T.C.I., will not want to give Gates those rights.

If Gates does succeed in providing the operating system for the new machine, he will have tremendous influence over the way people communicate with one another: he, more than anyone else, will determine what it is like to use the information highway. His great advantage is that Microsoft knows how to make software, and neither the telephone companies nor the cable companies know how to do that. Another advantage Bill Gates has is that he already lives on the information highway.

New employees at Microsoft are likely to encounter Bill Gates electronically long before they meet him in person. Some get to thinking of him by his E-mail handle, which is "billg," rather than by his real name. You'll be chatting with a Microsoft employee in the employee's office, the computer will make a little belch or squeak, indicating an incoming piece of electronic mail, and it'll be E-mail from Bill. It is not unusual to hear a young employee say, "Hey, that's a good idea, I'm going to E-mail Bill about that." While I was attending a lunchtime cookout at Microsoft headquarters one day, I heard several people start conversations by asking about E-mail from Bill: "Did you get mail from Bill today?" "Did you see Bill's mail?" Bill and Melinda were in Africa at the time, touring the valley where the oldest human skeleton, Lucy, was discovered, but I had the sense that he was present, in the network, flying around the Microsoft campus

ANGEL

A white, pure-cotton angel
till this day hovering in my closet
on a metallic hanger. It's thanks to him
that nothing untoward in all these years
has ever happened to me, or to these very quarters.
A modest radius, one might say, though clearly
delineated. Having been made unlike
ourselves in the image and in the likeness
but incorporeal, angels possess just color
and velocity. The latter explains their being
everywhere. That's why you are still
with me. Wings and shoulder straps can indeed
manage without a proper torso,
shapely limbs, or love per se, and cherish
anonymity, letting the body burgeon
with happiness in diameter somewhere in evergreen
California.

—Joseph Brodsky

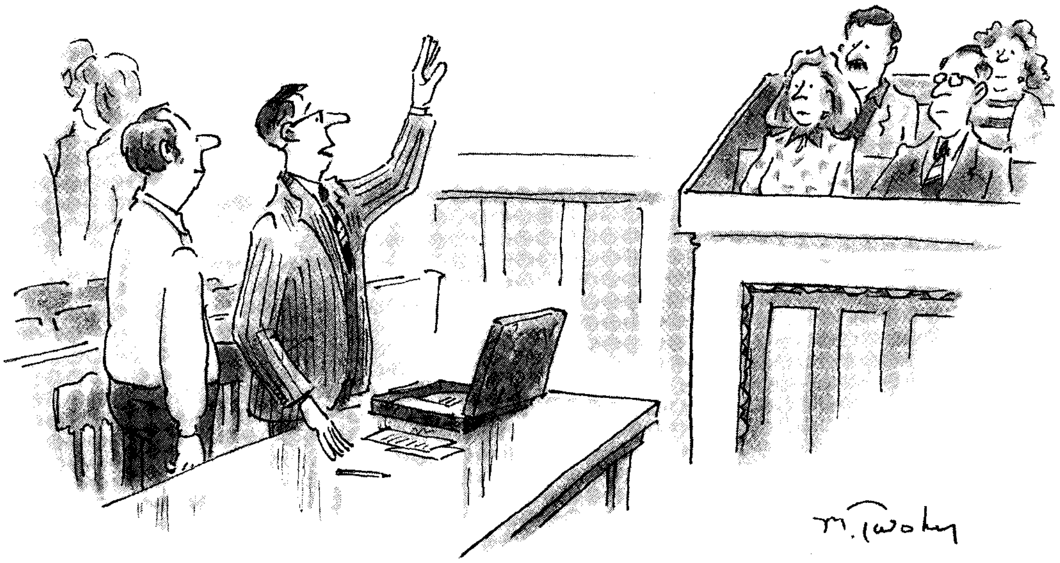
and popping into people's computers.

The Microsoft campus looks like a college campus: there are playing fields, and employees in T-shirts and jeans who aren't much older than college students. Nowhere on earth do more millionaires and billionaires go to work every day than do so here—about twenty-two hundred of the fifteen thousand employees own at least a million dollars' worth of Microsoft stock—but the campus is in no respect worldly. Workers spend much of their day staring into large computer monitors and occasionally exploding into a rapid fingering of keys. Empty soda cans and cardboard latte cups collect on their desks. Designing software—or "writing code," as people in the trade say—is a sort of intellectual handiwork. Operating systems, the most monumental of all software constructions, are like medieval cathedrals: thousands of laborers toil for years on small parts of them, each one working by hand, fashioning zeros and ones into patterns that control switches inside microprocessors, which constitute the brains of a computer. The platonic nature of software—it is invisible, weightless, and odorless; it doesn't exist in the physical world—determines much of the culture that surrounds it. At Microsoft, workers often describe each other as "smart" or "supersmart" or "one of the smartest people you'll meet around here," and it is almost an article of faith that Bill Gates, who co-founded the company with Paul Allen, a friend from his high-school days, in 1975, when he was nineteen years old, is the smartest person of all. "Bill is just smarter than everyone else," Mike Maples, an executive vice-president of Microsoft, says. "There are probably more smart people per square foot right here than anywhere else in the world, but Bill is just smarter."

Gates' office is exactly twice as large as the offices of junior employees, and his carpeting is a little richer than the carpeting in other offices; otherwise, there is nothing fancy about the place. A large monitor sits on his desk, and on the wall behind the desk are pictures from important moments in Gates' career, many of which coincide with important moments in the history of the personal computer. There are also pictures of Gates' two sisters, and of his mother and father. (No picture of Melinda French is visible, partly because Gates wants to keep her job as normal as he can.) As in all the Microsoft offices, one rarely hears the sound of a ringing phone. The employees send a total of two hundred million E-mail messages to each other every month. (Over at McCaw Cellular Communications, another prominent high-tech company, whose headquarters is a few miles from Microsoft's, phones ring all the time, and everyone wears a beeper.) Gates spends at least two hours a day at his desk staring into his monitor, reading and writing E-mail. E-mail allows Gates to run the company in his head, in a sense. While he is working, he rocks. Whether he is in business meetings, on airplanes, or listening to a speech, his upper body rocks down to an almost forty-five-degree angle, rocks back up, rocks down again. His elbows are often folded together, resting in his crotch. He rocks at different levels of intensity according to his mood. Sometimes people who are in the meetings begin to rock with him. "I think it's just excess energy," Gates said to me about his rocking. "I should stop, but I haven't yet. They claim I started at an extremely young age. I had a rocking horse and they used to put me to sleep on my rocking horse, and I think that addicted me."

Gates does not have the physical charisma of, say, Steve Jobs, the co-founder of Apple Computer. Like Lenin, Gates leads by sheer force of intellect. He looks like a teen-ager, but not because he actually looks younger than thirty-eight. In some ways, he looks older—a very old little boy. It is the oddly undeveloped quality in his pale, freckled face that makes him seem boyish. His hair is brown and is almost always uncombed. He has heavy lips, which contort into odd shapes when he talks. His characteristic pose when he is standing is pelvis pushed forward slightly, one arm wrapped around his body, the other arm occasionally going up into the air as he talks—kind of flying up, almost spastically, with the palm outstretched, then settling again somewhere on his chest. His voice is toneless, with a somewhat weary note of enthusiasm permanently etched into it, and his vocabulary is bland: "stuff" is "cool," "neat," "crummy," "super," "supercool."

When Gates was in his twenties, his mother color-coördinated his clothes—he had green days, beige days, blue days—and then the job was taken over by girlfriends, and now it will presumably fall to his wife, but so far no one has really handled the task successfully. "A lot of his friends have said, 'Bill, come on, let's go on a shopping spree,



"I would also like to thank the jury for validating my work."

we'll buy you some clothes,' but it never works," Ann Winblad, who is now a highly respected venture capitalist in Silicon Valley, and was the woman in Bill's life for five years, told me. "Bill just doesn't think about clothes. And his hygiene is not good. And his glasses—how can he see out of them? But Bill's attitude is: I'm in this pure mind state, and clothes and hygiene are last on the list." Esther Dyson, who edits a computer-industry newletter called *Release 1.0.*, says, "I'm told that within Microsoft certain people are allowed to take Bill's glasses off and wipe them, but I've never done it. You know, it's like—'Don't try this at home.' "

Gates is famously confrontational. If he strongly disagrees with what you're saying, he is in the habit of blurting out, "That's the stupidest fucking thing I've ever heard!" People tell stories of Gates spraying saliva into the face of some hapless employee as he yells, "This stuff isn't hard! I could do this stuff in a weekend!" What you're supposed to do in a situation like this, as in encounters with grizzly bears, is stand your ground: if you flee, the bear will think you're game and will pursue you, and you can't outrun a bear. I had a chance to try this approach one day in Gates' office, when I made a remark to him about Microsoft's antitrust problems, and he got mad at me. I had mentioned the theory that Anne Bingaman, who is the head of the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice, would not have taken the highly unusual and public action of requesting the Microsoft file from the Federal Trade Commission, which had pursued a three-year investigation of Microsoft, if she had not felt she could make a good case against the company. (In the end, the F.T.C. did not file any charges.) All the soft planes in Gates' face contorted into an expression of pure sarcasm. "I think you're a little *confused*," he said. "You're saying that before they read even a single piece of paper they judge what kind of case they have?" He choked slightly on his disgust for my stupidity. "I think you're confused," he said again. "The Justice Department *chose* to get the information to *decide* what to do. Saying they have a pretty good case before they've read anything—is that how these things work?" Going by the book, I answered that someone at the F.T.C. could have *told* someone in the Justice Department that the case against Microsoft was strong. This seemed to make the situation worse. "Look," Gates said. "The Department of Justice is looking at these files. You know? It's *justice*? You're supposed to have *facts* before you decide things?" I felt a trickle of sweat run down my back.

All the executives directly under Gates are male, and almost all are in their mid-thirties. Nathan Mhyrvold, thirty-four, who as a graduate student at Cambridge University interpreted for Stephen Hawking, is in charge of new technology. Steve Ballmer, thirty-seven, who is Gates' best friend, runs the numbers side of the business. He and Gates met during freshman year at Harvard, when they lived down the hall from each other. Cramming together for an advanced-economics exam was a determining event in their relationship. Ballmer acted this scene out for me, pacing around the room, waving his arms, the shirttail of his oxford shirt poking out of his khakis, as he cried, " 'Yes! We're golden! We're going to pass! No! Shit! We're screwed! We're going to fail! No! Yes! We're golden! We're screwed!' We'd get real up or real down, and it's still that way. We love to get up and down."

Ballmer is the reason Gates always flies coach when he is travelling on business. "If you're going to work for this company," Ballmer told me, "you're going to rent a certain kind of car and stay in a certain kind of hotel and fly coach, because that's business, and anything else is just aggrandizement." Gates once chartered a plane because he had to get somewhere in a hurry, but Ballmer gave him so much grief that Gates is still explaining why he did it. Experienced fliers into and out of Seattle know to scan the cabin for a man with a blanket over his head—that's Bill Gates, taking a nap.

BECAUSE Bill Gates was my first E-mail relationship, I wasn't always sure how to comport myself electronically, and occasionally I solicited advice from experienced E-mailers. Once, while I was questioning a media analyst named Mark Stahlman about a point of E-mail etiquette, he said to me, "Well, hey, you're not a digital guy!" This line often popped into my head when I was E-mailing Bill. Was I behaving like a digital guy? Is digital guyhood what nerds will molt into when the information highway reaches everyone's door? One evening, I was at home listening to some music, doing this geeky dance I do and, as usual, wondering whether the Wall Street types across the street were watching me, when I suddenly thought, Would Bill Gates care about those guys? I took this as a sign I was becoming a digital guy. Around the same time, I read an essay in *Wired* magazine by Paul Saffo, who is a director of the Institute for the Future, a think tank in Menlo Park, which argued that the information highway is going to cause a flowering of personal expression not seen in our society since the sixties, and that when this happens (maybe in five years) people whom we now think of as computer nerds will have the same hipness that in retrospect we now assign to beatniks.

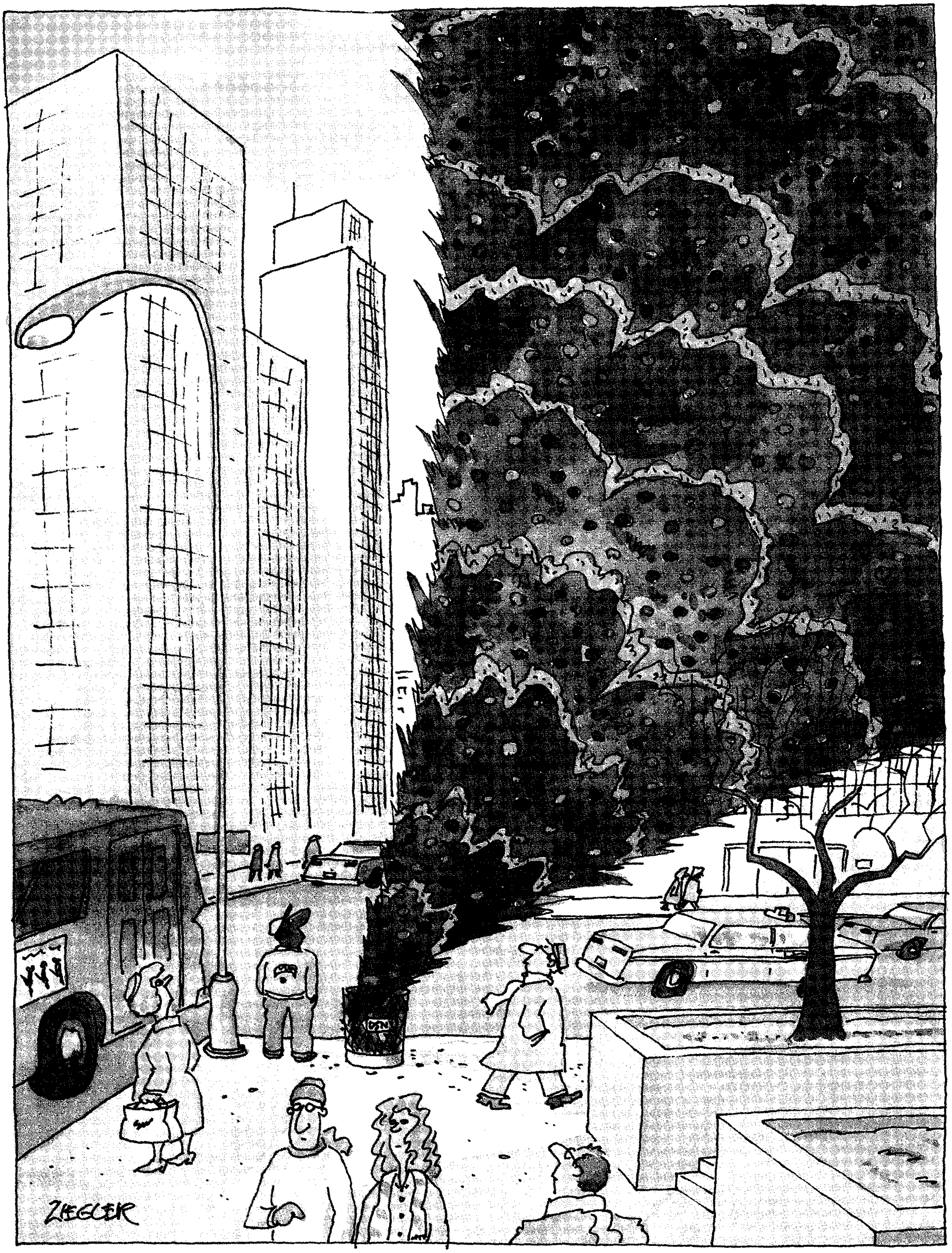
I wrote Gates a message with the title "How does the future make you feel?" (Putting a title on messages is one of the different things about E-mail communication. It is a little like writing a publicity release for what you have to say. However, it does focus the message.)

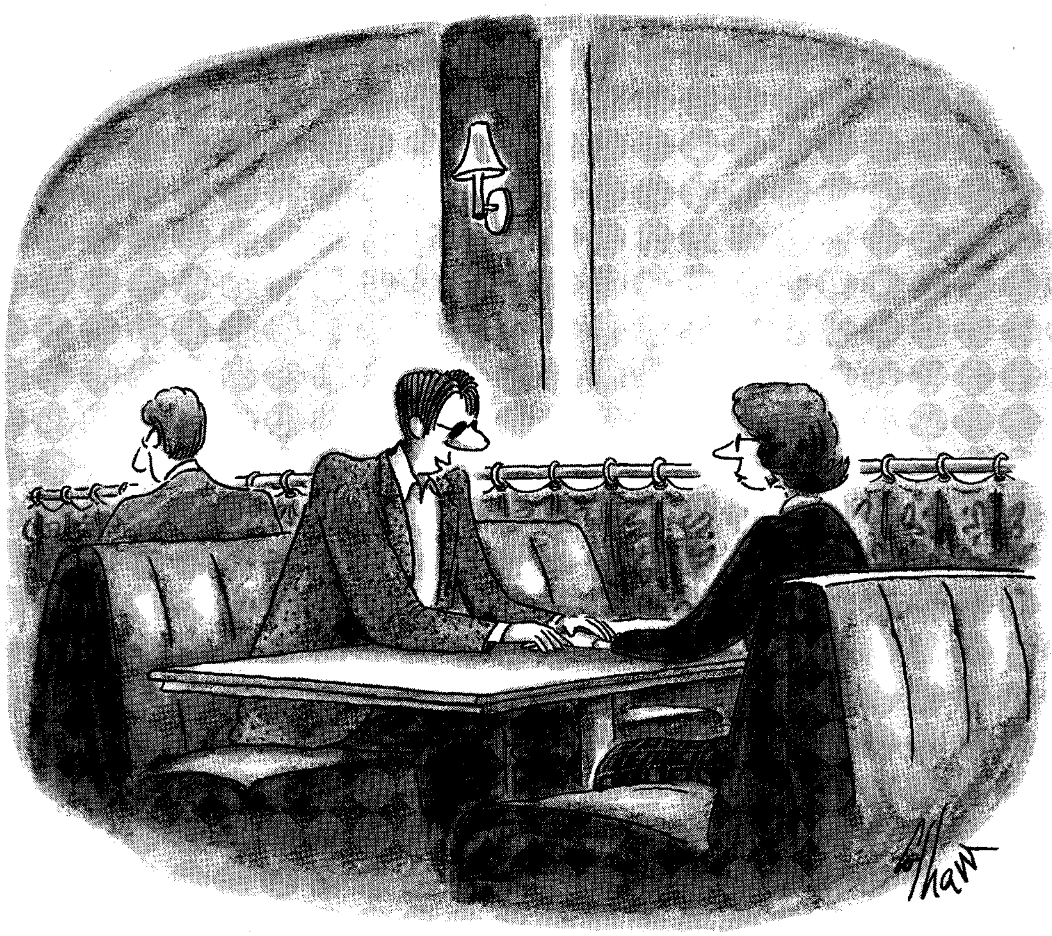
> How does the rapid change in the power of microprocessors make you feel? The certainty that microprocessors will grow twice as fast every eighteen months and that nothing in Nature, no fire or earthquake or tidal wave, is powerful enough to stop this from happening. Are you thrilled by this? Do you think that this power is God, as you understand God? Is it possible this power could be bad?

Gates wrote back:

> Feelings are pretty personal. I love coming up with new ideas or seeing in advance what is going to count and then making it happen. I love working with smart people. . . . Our business is very very competitive—one or two false moves and you can fall behind in a way that would wipe you out. Market share does not give you the right to relax. IBM is the best example of this. This is very scary but also makes it very interesting.
>
> The digital revolution is all about facilitation—creating tools to make things easy. When I was a kid I was a lot more curious than I am today—perhaps I have lost less curiosity than the average adult but if I had had the information tools we are building today I would know a lot more and not have given up learning some things.
>
> These tools will be really cool. Say today you want to meet someone with similar interests to talk or take a trip together or

JANUARY 3RD AT ROCKEFELLER CENTER





“I carry a .38 special. What do you carry?”

whatever? Its hard and somewhat random. Say you want to make sure you pick a good doctor or read a good book? We can make all of these things work so well—its empowering stuff.

Enough for now.

I wrote a message titled “TV as the Opium of the People”:

Some people are afraid of interactive TV. TV is a drug, goes the argument, and the technology that Microsoft and others are supplying is going to make the drug stronger. People will be inside more than ever, cut off from their neighbors, watching interactive monster truck contests. Or porno. They will pile up large cable and credit card charges. A “T. S. Eliot wasteland . . . a nation of housebound zombies,” as Michael Eisner put it recently in a speech. Do you think this could happen? What difference does it make if you invent smart boxes to deliver dumb programming?

Gates wrote:

Interactive TV is probably a really bad name for the in-home device connected to the information highway.

Lets say I am sitting at home wondering about some new drug that was prescribed to me. Or wanting to ask a question to my children’s teacher. Or curious about my social security status. Or wondering about crime in my neighborhood. Or wanting to exchange information with other people thinking about visiting Tanzania. Or wondering if the new lawn mower I want to buy works well and if its a good price. Or I want to ask people who read a book what they thought of it before I take my time reading it. In all of these cases being able to reach out and communicate by using a messaging or bulletin board type system lets me do something I could never do before. Assume that the infrastructure and device to do this is easy to use and it was funded by the cable or phone company primarily because I like to watch movies and video-conference with my relatives.

All of the above is about how adults will use the system. Kids will use it in ways we can’t even imagine.

The opportunity for people to reach out and share is amazing. This doesnt mean you will spend more time inside! It means you will use your time more effectively and get to do the things you like more than in the past as well as doing new things. If you like to get outside you will find out a lot more about the places that are not crowded and find good companions to go with.

The bottom line is that 2 way communication is a very different beast than 1 way communication. In some ways a phone that has an unbelievable directory, lets you talk or send messages to lots of people, and works with text and pictures is a better analogy than TV. The phone did change the world by making it a smaller place. This will be even more dramatic. There will be some secondary effects that people will worry about but they won’t be the same as TV. We are involved in creating a new media but it is not up to us to be the censors or referees of this media—it is up to public policy to make those decisions.

Because TV had very few channels the value of TV time was very high so only things of VERY broad interest could be aired on those few channels. The information highway will be the opposite of this—more like the library of congress but with an easy way to find things.

• •

I sometimes felt that this correspondence was a game I was playing with Gates through the computer, or maybe a game I was playing against a computer. What is the right move? What question will get me past the dragon and into the wizard’s star chamber, where the rich information is stored? I had no idea where Gates was when he wrote to me, except that once he told me he was on a “think week” at his family’s summer place on Hood Canal. I could not tell whether he was impatient or bored with my questions and was merely answering them because it served his interest. Because we couldn’t talk at the same time, there was little chance for the conversation to move spontaneously. On the other hand, his answers meant more, in a certain way, being written, than answers I would have received on the phone. I worried that he might think I was being “random” (a big putdown at Microsoft) because I jumped from topic to topic. I sometimes wondered if I was actually communicating with Bill Gates. How hard would it be for an assistant to write these messages? Or for an intelligent agent to do it?

I wrote a message titled “What motivates you?”:

You love to compete, right? Is that

where your energy comes from—love of the game? I wonder how it feels to win on your level. How much do you fear losing? How about immortality—being remembered for a thousand years after you're dead—does that excite you? How strong is your desire to improve people's lives (by providing them with better tools for thinking and communicating)? Some driven people are trying to heal a wound or to recover a loss. Is that the case with you?

Gates wrote back:

> Its easy to understand why I think I have the best job around because of day to day enjoyment rather than some grand long term deep psychological explanation. Its a lot of fun to work with very smart people in a competitive environment. . . . We get to hire the best people coming out of school and give them challenging jobs. We get to try and figure out how to sell software in every part of the world. Sometimes our ideas work very well and sometimes they work very poorly. As long as we stay in the feedback loop and keep trying its a lot of fun.
>
> It is pretty cool that the products we work on empower individuals and make their jobs more interesting. It helps a lot in inventing new software ideas that I will be one of the users of the software so I can model what's important. . . .
>
> Just thinking of things as winning is a terrible approach. Success comes from focusing in on what you really like and are good at—not challenging every random thing. My original vision of a personal computer on every desk and every home will take more than 15 years to achieve so there will have been more than 30 years since I first got excited about that goal. My work is not like sports where you actually win a game and its over after a short period of time.
>
> Besides a lot of luck, a high energy level and perhaps some IQ I think having an ability to deal with things at a very detailed level and a very broad level and synthesize between them is probably the thing that helps me the most. This allows someone to take deep technical understanding and figure out a business strategy that fits together with it.
>
> It's ridiculous to consider how things will be remembered after you are dead. The pioneers of personal computers including Jobs, Kapor, Lampson, Roberts, Kaye, are all great people but I don't think any of us will merit an entry in a history book.
>
> I don't remember being wounded or losing something big so I don't think that is driving me. I have wonderful parents and great siblings. I live in the same neighborhood I grew up in (although I will be moving across the lake when my new house is done). I can't remember any major disappointments. I did figure out at one point that if I pursued pure mathematics it would be hard to make a major contribution and there were a few girls who turned me down when I asked them out.

At the end of one message, I wrote:

> This reporting via e-mail is really fascinating and I think you are going to come across in an attractive way, in case you weren't sure of that.

Gates wrote:

> I comb my hair everytime before I send email hoping to appear attractive. I try and use punctuation in a friendly way also. I send :) and never :(.

I wrote a message asking Gates whether it was possible that the alliance with Time Warner and T.C.I. was on shaky ground because Gerald Levin and John Malone were afraid that Gates was too smart for them.

Gates wrote:

> Your mail is the first time I have ever heard anyone suggest that John Malone and Jerry Levin deserve sympathy. They are both great people. They are both smarter about deal making than I will ever be. John and Jerry and I share a vision of what the Information Highway can become. Its an incredible opportunity for all 3 companies and we have been spending time to discussing how we might help each other. We don't have anything concrete at this stage although we have developed a high level of trust for each other.

I sent a message asking how much of his money Gates was planning on giving away:

> Will there one day be a Gates Foundation, the way we have Rockefeller, Ford, Carnegie Foundations? When? How acutely do you feel a sense of social responsibility? What kinds of philanthropy would you like your money to perform? How do you feel about leaving a lot of money to your kids?

Gates replied:

> I think that giving money away takes a lot of effort. Not as much effort as making it but still a lot to do it properly. Therefore when I am old and have time I will put some effort into that. Assuming I still have a lot of money by the time I retire which is certainly no certain thing I will give away well over 90% of it since I dont believe in kids having too much money. I am like my friend Warren Buffett in this respect. I have already done some giving like to UW for a biotechnology department [Gate gave the University of Washington twelve million dollars] and some to Stanford for a computer science building [six million] and some to United Way which I really believe in. I do believe in funding great research so some of my philanthropy will relate to that. Some to humans service activities. Some to education. Some to population control efforts if it looks like donations can really help there.

I wrote mail about "The Great Gatsby," which is one of Gates' favorite books. ("The Catcher in the Rye" and "A Separate Peace" are other favorites.) Gates dressed as Gatsby for his thirtieth birthday, and again for an engagement party that friends and colleagues in Silicon Valley threw for him and Melinda in September. (Melinda dressed as Daisy Buchanan.)

Gates wrote:

> Gatsby had a dream and he pursued it not even really thinking he might fail or worse that what he dreamed of wasn't real. The green light is a symbol of his optimism—he had come so far he could hardly fail to grasp it. At the end Fitz is reinforcing what a romantic figure Gatsby is. Its also sort of about America but I think of it more in terms of the people.

Once, when I was composing E-mail to Gates on an airplane, I felt physically closer to him than when I was composing from home. Perhaps I was thinking of all the thousands of people who have encountered this remarkable person on airplanes, restlessly wandering the aisles with his shoes off, or sitting in a seat staring into the screen of his laptop computer, rocking, writing E-mail that will be fired into the network when the plane lands and send hundreds of people at Microsoft scurrying into action.

Many executives in the telegraph industry, which had enjoyed control of the communications field since about 1840, believed that the telephone did not present a threat to their business, because no one would want a communications machine that did not leave a written record of the conversation, as telegrams did. When William Orton, the president of Western Union, which was the Microsoft of its day, was offered the opportunity to buy Alexander Graham Bell's patent on the telephone for a hundred thousand dollars, he is said to have replied, "What use could this company make of an electric toy?" This remark seems less dim to me now.

TECHNOLOGICAL change is not democratic, but if we did have a choice would we vote for a man who sometimes behaves like a ten-year-old boy to be the principal architect of the way we communicate with each other in the future? Or is it Gates' gift that he isn't socialized in a way you'd expect a corporate executive to be. When I was ten, I would sit around with my friends watching it snow, and someone would say, "I wonder what the deepest snowfall ever was," or something like that, and someone else would say, "*Yeah,* it would be *cool* to know that." It seemed that there should be this giant, all-knowing brain, which could answer that kind of question. One of the lessons you learn in becoming an adult is that it doesn't always pay to be curious. Some people learn to avoid curiosity altogether. Gates appears to have completely failed to absorb this lesson. My impression is that he still has the fantasy of the giant, all-knowing brain, and that this is what the information highway means to him. It's a place where curiosity is rewarded.

Not long ago, Paul Saffo, of the Institute for the Future, said to me, "Bill Gates is an introvert. He is not the kind of person you want building the social network of the future." Ann Winblad, Gates' former girlfriend, told me, "People who know Bill know that you have to bring him into a group—say, 'Hey, Bill, tell us the story of such-and-such'—because he doesn't have the social skills to do it on his own. But that doesn't mean he isn't social. Bill is an open, emotional guy—very. He's actually more open with his feelings than most men I know. He is not afraid to express fear, or sadness, but hardly anyone sees that. You can't show that when you're in Bill's position, when everyone is watching your tiniest gesture. It's not good leadership to show weakness." An executive with a leading competitor of Microsoft's says of Gates, "Hey—I think the guy is truly dangerous. Bill is the most surprisingly conscience-free individual I've ever met, and that amount of power in the hands of a guy without a conscience is dangerous. Big Brother did not happen in 1984, but it could happen in 2004. Ask yourself, 'If there was to be a technology-oriented dictator by the year 2004, who would he be? Bill Gates?' "

Gates argues that Microsoft has to behave aggressively because of a principle called Moore's Law, which is named after Gordon Moore, one of the founders of the Intel Corporation. Moore's Law is the reason the computer industry is fundamentally different from any other industry in history. It states that microprocessors get twice as powerful, or twice as cheap, every eighteen months. This means that in twenty years what now takes a year of computing will take fifteen minutes. We have no idea what we are going to do with this power, but it will exist whether we want it to or not. No natural calamity or political upheaval short of world-wide anarchy is powerful enough to stop it. Nathan Mhyrvold, of Microsoft, said to me, "Nature has already signed off on this stuff." Moore's Law is the primary reason that all the companies that dominated the computer industry in the nineteen-seventies are now struggling or gone, and the reason that Microsoft, for

LOVE

Dark falls on this Midwestern town
where we once lived when myths collided.
Dusk has hidden the bridge in the river
which slides and deepens
to become the water
the hero passed on his way to Hell.
Not far from here is our old apartment.
We had a kitchen and an Amish table.
We had a view. And we discovered there
love had the feather and muscle of wings
and had come to live with us,
a brother of fire and air.

We had two infant children, one of whom
was touched by death in this town
and spared: and when the hero
was hailed by his comrades in Hell
their mouths opened and their voices failed and
there is no knowing what they would have asked
about a life they had shared and lost.

I am your wife.
It was years ago.
Our child is healed. We love each other still.
Across our day-to-day and ordinary distances
we speak plainly. We hear each other clearly.

And yet I want to return to you
on the bridge of the Iowa river where you were,
with snow on the shoulders of your coat
and a car passing with its headlights on:
I see you as a hero in a text—
the image blazing and the edges gilded—
and I long to cry out the epic question,
my dear companion:
Will we ever live so intensely again?
Will love come to us again and be
so formidable at rest it offered us ascension
even to look at him?
But the words are shadows and you cannot hear me.
You walk away and I cannot follow.

—Eavan Boland

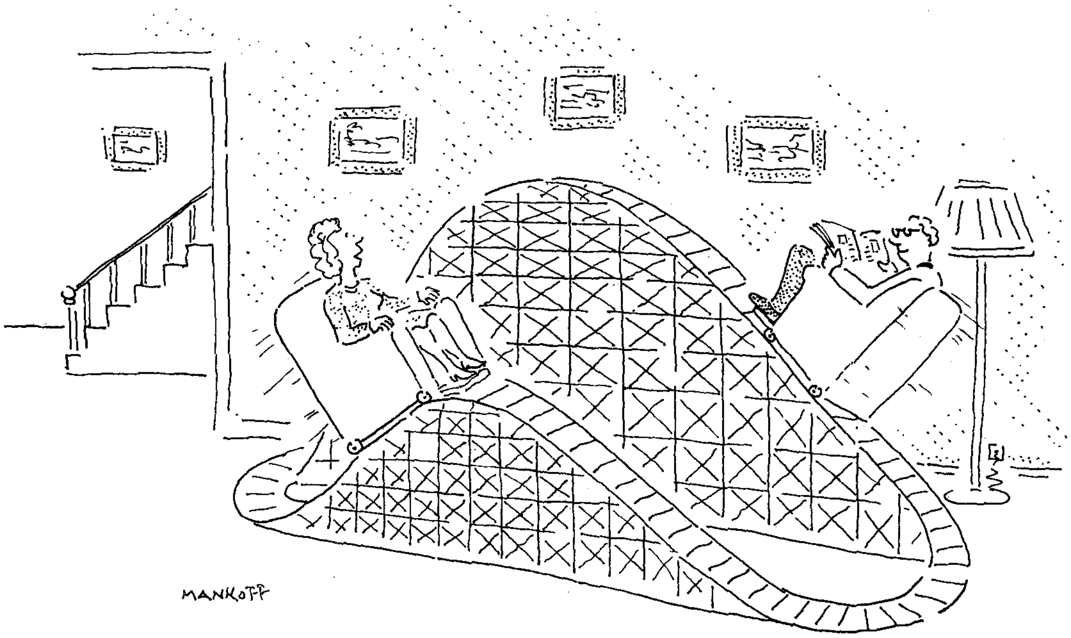
all its power, could disappear in a decade.

Scott McNealy, the head of Sun Microsystems, which is a leading manufacturer of computer workstations, told me, "I like Bill. Bill is a smart guy. But I think the problem is that Microsoft has caught the bunny. You know, when you go to the dog track they have that mechanical bunny that makes the dogs run? Well, sometimes a dog is so fast he catches the bunny and then the other dogs don't run anymore. That's the situation in the software business today: Bill has caught the bunny. I admire Bill for catching the bunny, but now we can't have a race. He ought to be loosed from the bunny, to give the other dogs a chance."

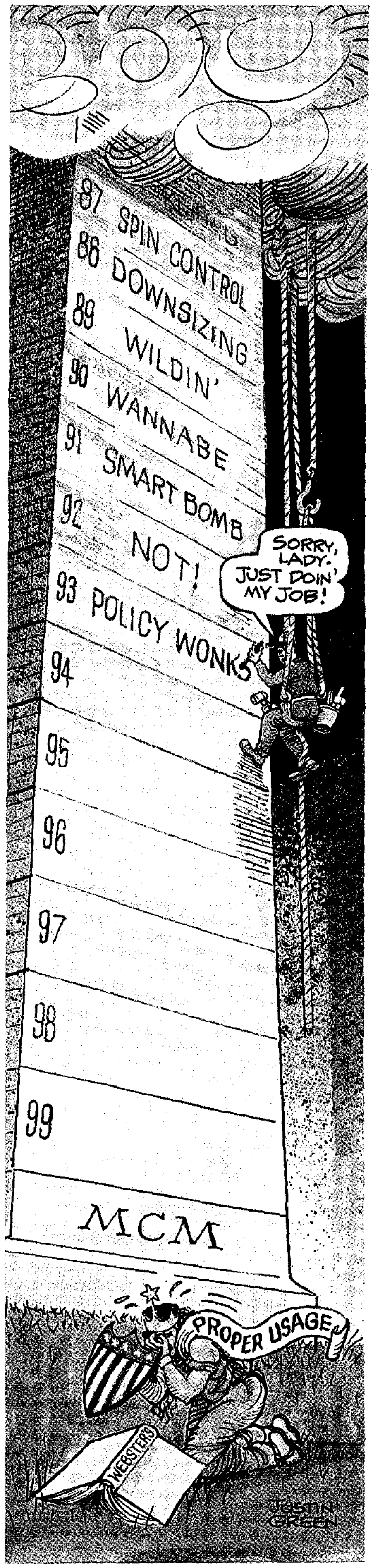
The argument that Microsoft is shaping up to be the Standard Oil of the Information Age and that the government ought to loose Bill from the bunny before this happens is now being heard within the Department of Justice. As the head of the Department's Antitrust Division, Anne Bingaman is an antimonopolist, the sort of person who was common around the Justice Department in the nineteen-thirties and forties, and was thoroughly weeded out in the eighties, a period during which the laws on what constitutes a monopoly were relaxed, making it harder for people like Bingaman to operate. Now Bingaman is expected to regain some of the ground lost by the anti-monopolists, and she seems to be using Microsoft as her vehicle. Justice Department lawyers are currently studying the file that Bingaman requested from the Federal Trade Commission, and are said to be readying a case against Microsoft, though whether Bingaman will bring narrow antitrust charges, which would require the company to pay a fine it could easily afford, or will bring a broad antitrust case, or will even attempt to break Microsoft up, has not been decided.

There is substantial political pressure not to prosecute Microsoft. Microsoft is the principal reason that the United States is by far the world leader in software production, an industry that has an unimaginable potential for growth. Also, the government's huge antitrust case against I.B.M., which was filed in 1969 and ended with the government's giving up on it in 1982, distracted and weakened that organization, and helped companies like Microsoft to get the better of it. Some people argue that the computer industry actually wants and needs a monopolistic presence like Microsoft, because such a presence can work to create a standard computer language that other companies can design products for and that the public can use in common. That is the role I.B.M. played, and now that I.B.M. has been dethroned, thanks partly to Microsoft, people expect Microsoft to perform it.

One big difference between Gates and other early software entrepreneurs is that, whereas the others were bright kids from middle-class homes who achieved success beyond their expectations, Gates was born to rule. His childhood was emphatically not the stuff of Horatio Alger novels. His father, Bill Gates, Jr., is a well-known corporate lawyer in Seattle and a former president of the Washington State Bar Association, and his mother, Mary Gates, is a former regent at the University of Washington and was on the national board of the United Way and of U S West. Washington State governors and senators were guests at the house when Bill was a boy. At dinner, the parents would lead the children—Bill and his sisters, Kristi and Libby—in discussions of current affairs. The family also played a lot of games and horsed around together. "I really like Bill's family, but it would be nice if you could talk to them once in a while when they weren't in a human pyramid," Ida Cole, a former Microsoft executive, has said. Water-skiing was and remains a passion of Gates': several Seattleites have described for me the experience of coming across the Evergreen Bridge early on a Sunday morning in the summer and seeing Gates' big powerboat on Lake Washington, with Gates' white, toneless body water-skiing behind it and throwing up a big coxcomb of spray. Young Bill was obsessive about improving aspects of himself he didn't like. "He was always upset about his little toe curling in, so he'd work on it. He'd spend time holding it out so he'd have a straight toe," his sister Kristi told Stephen Manes and Paul Andrews, the co-authors of "Gates," a recently published biography. Gates used to try to impress his sisters by jumping out of a trash can, and he still occasionally jumps over his office chair from a standstill. Sometimes, on his way to a business meeting, he suddenly jumps up and tries to touch as high as he can on a wall, or to touch higher than the spot he touched last time, but he says, in "Gates," "I don't jump spontaneously the way I used to, in the early years of the company . . . or even in a meeting. . . . Now the jumping is not



"Great—really great—but I'd still like to get out of the house every once in a while."



that common." However, he has planned a full-size trampoline for a house he is building. In Japan, a comic book about the adventures of a boy modelled on Bill Gates is called "Young Jump."

Gates attended Lakeside School, one of the best private schools in the Seattle area, and there he met Paul Allen, who was three years older. The two began spending a lot of time in the school's computer room. In 1971, when Gates was sixteen, he wrote a program that made it easier for cities to collect traffic statistics. That same year, he and Allen started a company called Traf-o-Data. In the Lakeside yearbook for 1973, Gates' senior year, there is a picture of Gates in the computer room with a stocking cap pulled over his head and lying on a table, over the caption "Who is this man?"

Joseph Weizenbaum, a computer scientist at M.I.T., perhaps overstating the case a little for effect, wrote, in "Computer Power and Human Reason," this early portrait of computer hackers: "Bright young men of disheveled appearance, often with sunken glowing eyes, [who] can be seen sitting at computer consoles . . . on which their attention seems to be as riveted as a gambler's on the rolling dice. . . . They work until they nearly drop, twenty, thirty hours at a time. Their food, if they arrange it, is brought to them: coffee, Cokes, sandwiches. . . . Their rumpled clothes, their unwashed and unshaven faces, and their uncombed hair all testify that they are oblivious to their bodies and to the world in which they move." This description matches Gates' outward appearance, but Gates was different from most hackers in one important respect: Hackers were interested in computers as a hobby, mostly just for fun, whereas Gates always saw computers as a way of making money.

Gates and Allen sometimes talked about how cool it would be to design the software for the first personal computer, which appeared to be on the horizon, but this was not a serious career goal of Bill's. His father wanted him to become a lawyer. "When I was in college, it was really hard to pick a career, because everything seemed so attractive, and when you had to pick a specific one you had to say no to all the others," Gates told me. "I'd think, Well, if I went to that law firm some partner might not like me, and they might assign me to these crummy cases, and I'd think, Well, *God*, that could be really *crummy*." The question was settled in dramatic fashion in December, 1974, when Allen, who was working in Boston, passed a newsstand in Harvard Square and saw on the cover of *Popular Electronics* a computer called the Altair 8800. The Altair 8800 was the first computer that ordinary electronics hobbyists could afford to buy and that people with reasonable technical knowledge could assemble in their homes. Basically, it was the first personal computer. Allen bought the magazine, rushed over to Gates' dorm, and showed it to him. "Look!" Allen said. "It's going to happen! I told you this was going to happen! And we're going to miss it!"

They called Ed Roberts, the man who created the Altair, and told him that they had written a version of a programming language called BASIC for his computer. That wasn't true. It was an early use of a now common strategy in the computer industry, and at Microsoft in particular: announcing products that don't exist (known in the industry as "vaporware") in order to discourage possible competitors. After talking to Roberts, Bill and Paul went on an eight-week code-writing binge, with Gates writing most of the code, often falling asleep at the keyboard, dreaming in code, waking up, and immediately starting to write code again, with no real transition between dreaming and waking—just code. ("It was the coolest program I ever wrote," Gates later said.) At the end of the eight weeks, Allen flew out to Albuquerque, met with Roberts, loaded the software into the Altair, and typed "PRINT 2 + 2." The Altair spat out "4." The program worked.

By the end of 1975, Gates and Allen had founded a company, Micro-soft, to sell their BASIC. (The hyphen was dropped a few years later.) Now came what is perhaps the pivotal moment in the early history of the software industry. Computer hobbyists who had bought the Altair were dismayed to find that it didn't come with the software to operate it, and were even more dismayed when they learned that they had to buy the software for four hundred and fifty dollars from Micro-soft. At that time, no one thought of software as something you paid for. Software was just rolls of paper tape with little holes punched in it. A hacker would write a cool piece of software for fun, copy it, and give it away to his friends. Altair owners began to do the same thing with Micro-soft's BASIC. Then, in February of 1976, Gates published "An Open Letter to Hobbyists" in the Altair newsletter, and the letter now stands as a sort of Magna Carta of the software industry—the underpinning of the intellectual-property structure. It stated, "As the majority of hobbyists must be aware, most of you steal your software," and went on to argue that software was just as much a commodity as hardware, because it represented someone's intellectual work, and that the creators of the software should be compensated just as creators of hardware were.

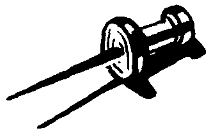
Gates shuttled between Harvard and Albuquerque until the start of his senior year, when he dropped out for good. The business expanded, and he and Allen relocated it to Seattle in 1978. In 1980, I.B.M. approached Gates to write an operating system for the personal computer it was designing, the I.B.M. PC. Gates flew down to Florida to meet the I.B.M. executives working on the project, realized on the way that he had forgotten to bring a tie, and drove around looking for a place to buy one. The I.B.M. executives, who had never laid eyes on Gates, were stunned to see that their prospective partner looked exactly like one of the hackers they were beginning to read about in the press. They told Gates they needed an operating system in three months—an impossibly short time—and Gates accepted the job. Upon returning to Seattle, he bought an operating system called QDOS, which was short for Quick and Dirty Operating System, from another software developer, Seattle Computer, for around seventy-five thousand dollars, renamed it MS-DOS, and, in a three-month code-writing marathon, converted it to I.B.M.'s specifications.

Software is sometimes said to be to the age of information as oil was to the age of the machine. Software is what makes information systems operate. Software is like a natural resource, except that its source is not in the earth but in the human mind: people carry pools of software in their heads. Its lack of physical existence makes its importance easy to underestimate. I.B.M., which was one of the great business organizations in history, and which was perfectly placed to own the personal-computer business, disastrously failed to appreciate the importance of the software Gates designed for it. Because I.B.M. thought that the money was going to be in the hardware, in the computers themselves, it allowed Gates to retain the rights to MS-DOS. During the nineteen-eighties, the PC was cloned by other American manufacturers and by the Japanese, who could make and sell the machines more cheaply than I.B.M. could, but no one knew how to clone MS-DOS, and Bill Gates collected a fee for every PC and every PC clone sold in the world.

Two books about the fall of I.B.M. and Gates' role in it have recently appeared—"Big Blues," by Paul Carroll, and "Computer Wars," by Charles H. Ferguson and Charles R. Morris—and an occasional chill runs up the spine of anyone reading them at the ease with which Gates eviscerated men much older and more experienced than he was. "I kept wanting to say to Cannavino, 'We need a shorthand because these meetings are taking too long,' " Gates says in "Big Blues." James Cannavino was an I.B.M. executive with whom Gates negotiated about operating systems. Cannavino would begin meetings by making small talk about, say, his new car, in a misguided effort to establish some sort of personal rapport with Gates. Also, like many other American corporate executives of his generation, Cannavino would spend a lot of time talking about his company's values. This would drive Gates mad. "Every time you say 'thirteen,' I'll know that what that means is that all you want to do is what the customer wants," Gates says he imagined himself saying to Cannavino. "And for every one of these other gibberish slogans, we can also get little numbers. There are a lot of small integers available. We'll just tighten these meetings up. You know, Cannavino, if you want to talk about how you're going to save the U.S. educational system, okay, we've heard that story. That's a good fifteen-minute one. That can be number eleven." However, Gates managed to swallow these thoughts and let Cannavino talk. "I'm really very good at this stuff," he says. "I know how to be somebody's son. You know, 'Yes, Dad.' "

A prominent software executive told me, "I.B.M. thought they had Gates by the balls. He's just a hacker, they thought. A harmless nerd. What they actually had by the balls was an organism which has been bred for the accumulation of great power and maximum profit, the child of a lawyer, who knew the language of contracts, and who just ripped those I.B.M. guys apart." Another leading executive in the software industry said, "Think of I.B.M. and Microsoft as being a chess game, where Microsoft plays black. So they're at a disadvantage. So they have to set up a trap. Microsoft becomes the only supplier of a commodity that I.B.M. could not produce itself. Having done that, it proceeds to market that asset to weaken its partner's position. It's brilliant!"

Now, thirteen years after that contract, Microsoft is by far the largest software company in the world. It has a market capitalization of twenty-three billion dollars—more than General Motors, Xerox, or I.B.M. To what extent Gates is mainly a product of I.B.M.'s blunder, and therefore a kind of historical accident, and to what extent he is the first person to imagine software as a shrink-wrapped commodity, and is therefore a visionary, is a good question to ask if you are seated next to a computer-industry executive at a dinner party. Although Microsoft continues to manufacture MS-DOS, it has severed most of its ties with I.B.M. The break came over the operating system Windows, which Gates introduced in 1985. (Paul Allen, who had a scary encounter with Hodgkin's disease in 1983, retired, cashed in some of his Microsoft stock, bought the Portland Trail Blazers basketball team, and built a house with a basketball court on the property, where the team could practice. He also provided the funds for a Jimi Hendrix museum in Seattle. Lately, Allen, whose Microsoft stock is now worth $2.9 billion, has been in the news for buying nearly twenty-five per cent of America Online, an information service, and, most recently, for buying eighty per cent of TicketMaster.)



Windows is a graphical user interface, or GUI (computer people pronounce it "gooey"). Instead of operating the computer with keyboard commands, as you do in DOS, in Windows you use a pointing device—a mouse—to access little folders and documents on your electronic desktop. Xerox developed the desktop metaphor in the late seventies, and in the early eighties Apple Computer commercialized it. Gates saw that Apple's GUI was an easier system to use than DOS, and borrowed it. When Windows first appeared, it was widely viewed as a kludge (a dog): it was buggy (it had glitches) and was a memory pig (it used up a lot of space in the computer's hard drive), and it was generally less elegant than Apple's GUI. But Gates stayed with Windows and kept improving it. Gates understood that it did not matter if the software used lots of space on the hard drive as long as hard drives kept getting twice as powerful every eighteen months. Also, whereas Apple chose to keep its software proprietary—it could run only on machines that Apple made—Gates licensed Windows to any computer manufacturer that wanted it, just as he had done with DOS. When Apple realized its mistake—its strategy limited Apple's share of the operating-system market to the number of computers Apple could sell—it sued Microsoft for copyright infringement, but a federal court ruled that "the look and feel" of the desktop metaphor was not covered under Apple's copyright.

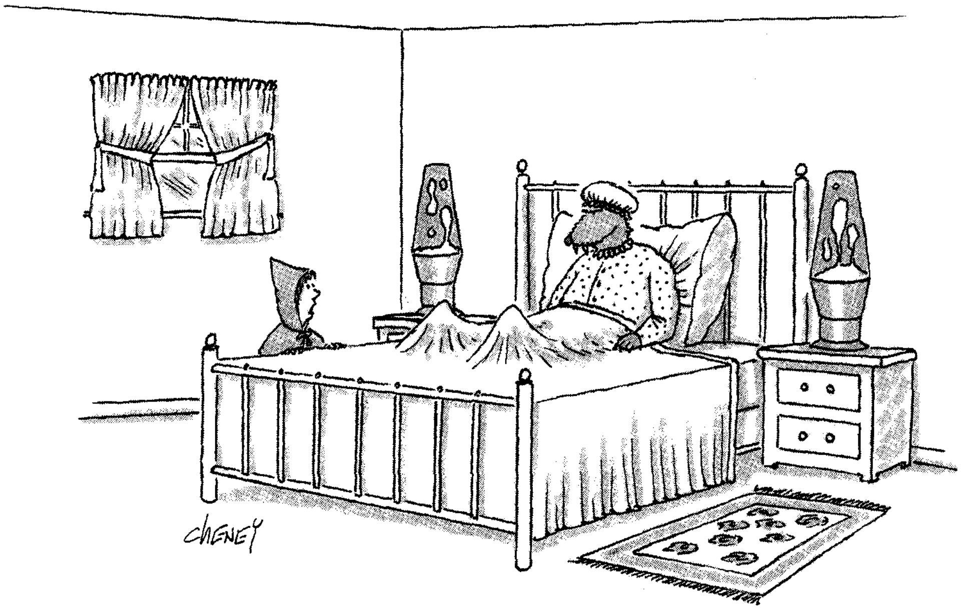
It is often said by Gates' detractors that he has never invented anything, and this is true in a sense, but you could say the same thing about Henry Ford. When the Model T appeared, in 1908, it was by no means the best car on the road, but it worked well enough, and it was affordable and easy to produce, and Ford stayed with it. Even today, most users still find Apple's operating system more intuitive than Windows, but, because the market for Windows is so much larger, other software manufacturers are more inclined to make applications for Windows than for Apple's operating system. If there is to be a standard computer language—which from the point of view of the public is greatly desirable—it now appears that Windows will be the one. But Gates has to worry that someone will do to Microsoft what Microsoft did to Apple. Apple is designing a new operating system with I.B.M.; it's code-named Pink, and is expected to appear sometime in 1995.

After a month of E-mail between Gates and me, my hour in his physical presence arrived. As we shook hands, he said, "Hello, I'm Bill Gates," and emitted a low, vaguely embarrassed chuckle. Is this the sound one E-mailer makes to another when they finally meet in real space? I was aware of a feeling of being discovered. In the front part of Gates' office, we sat down at right angles to each other. Gates had on normal-looking clothes—a green shirt with purple stripes, brown pants, black loafers. He rocked throughout our time together. He did not look at me very often but either looked down as he was talking or lifted his eyes above my head to look out the window in the direction of the campus. The angle of the light caused the purple stripes in his shirt to reflect in his glasses, which, in turn, threw an indigo tinge into the dark circles around his eyes.

The emotional boundaries of our encounter seemed to have been much expanded by the E-mail that preceded it: Gates would be angry one minute, almost goofily happy the next. I wondered if he was consciously using our present form of communication to express feelings that E-mail cannot convey. Maybe this is the way lots of people will communicate in the future: meet on the information highway, exchange messages, get to know the lining of each other's mind, then meet face to face. In each other's physical presence, they will be able to eliminate a lot of the polite formalities that clutter people's encounters now, and say what they really mean. If this happens, it will be a good thing about the information highway: electronic communication won't reduce face-to-face communication; instead, it will focus it.

I had been told not to ask Gates about his marriage, because he didn't want to talk about it, but I was emboldened by the familiarity that E-mail had established between us and asked anyway. Gates was silent, rocking gently (I interpreted that as a good sign) and staring down at his shoes. "Well, it's a pretty conventional marriage," he said after a while. "I'm male, and I'm marrying a female. And there's just two of us. And we plan to have rings on our

"No question I've had to rein in my natural playfulness in dealing with today's woman."



"My goodness, Grandmother, what big lava lamps you have!"

• •

fingers. And there'll be a minister. Or, actually, a priest, I think. Since I'm marrying a Catholic." He giggled. "Pretty standard stuff. In most dimensions, including this one, I'm just like everybody else. I found a girl and fell in love with her. I'm kind of old." As he talked, he began to make a peculiar *ahhh* sound—a sort of rapturous vocalized pause, with a little shyness in it, as if he were confiding in me.

"Some of your competitors are hoping that marriage is going to make you spend less time in the office," I said.

"Yeah, I think . . . ahhh . . . that's a pretty strange thing. Being married I don't think is that big a change. It did take up a lot of energy and time being single. I think in a way it's more complicated than being married. I mean, marriage has its own complexities, but they're different . . . ahhh . . . and I don't think timewise they're much different. And I've been going out with this person off and on for a number of years, so it's not like the day I get married it will be, like, whoa, wait a minute, she uses curlers to curl her hair, my God!"

Gates and his bride are constructing a thirty-five-million-dollar house on the eastern slope of Lake Washington, just outside Seattle—a series of five pavilions connected by underground passageways, with display screens scattered throughout the rooms and linked to a central data base containing hundreds of thousands of famous works of art in digital form. Gates does not own the art; he owns the right to reproduce the art digitally, and he and his assistants continue to throw museum officials around the world into confusion by offering to buy the digital rights to works in their collections.

"Do you worry that your wealth is going to corrupt you?"

"Absolutely." Gates sat upright and raised his arms in the air. "Absolutely. Hey. Being in the spotlight is a corrupting thing. Being successful is a corrupting thing. Having lots of money is a corrupting thing. These are very dangerous things, to be guarded against carefully. And I think that's very, very hard to do."

"How do you do it?"

"I'm very close to my family. And that's important to me. It's a very centering thing. I live in the same neighborhood I grew up in. One of my sisters lives there. We get together as a family a lot. The woman I'm marrying wants when we have kids to have a normal environment for them. So we'll mutually brainstorm about how to do the best we can at that." Gates thought for a while, then said, "I am a person who is very conscious of, like, why don't I have a TV in my house? I think TV is great. When I'm in a hotel room, I sit there and try all these new channels and see what's going on. I probably stay up too late watching stuff. TV is neat. I don't have a TV at home, because I would probably watch it, and I prefer to spend that time thinking—or, mostly, reading. So I'm pretty conscious about not letting myself get used to certain things."

"So do you consider yourself a puritanical person?"

"Oh, no no no. I'm not a puritan," Gates said. "Hey, if I was a puritan—" He grinned, apparently mentally flipping through a sequence of unpuritanical acts he had committed. "O.K., it's a little bit like this. I go to a baseball game, and I'm having a good time, watching the game, but then I feel myself getting drawn in. I start wondering, Who are these guys? Who are the good ones? How much are they paid? How are the other teams compared to this one? How have the rules changed? How do these guys compare to the guys twenty years ago? It just gets so interesting. I know if I let myself go to ten games I'd be addicted, and I'd want to go more. And there's only so much time in the day. And, frankly, it's easy for me to get interested in anything. I think, Gosh, am I going to get good at tennis? Well, we got these kayaks recently. I think, you know, Are we going to get into that? I was just in Africa. I think, Should I do my next two or three trips there—there's just so much there—but I'd sort of like to go to China, and actually I think I'll end up doing that for my next big trip, in two or three years. So there's all these choices, but time is this very scarce resource."

As we were saying goodbye, Gates said, "Well, you're welcome to keep sending me mail."

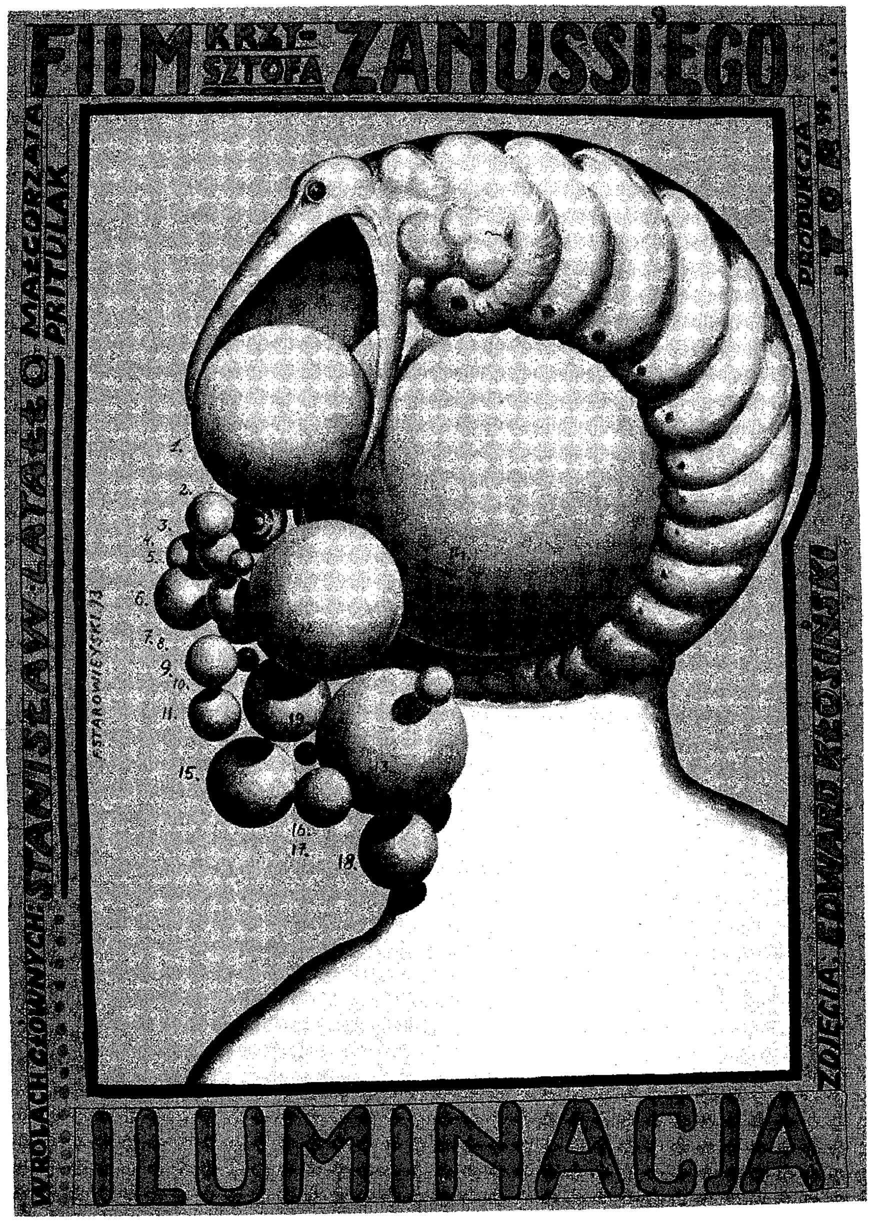
I walked out to my car, drove off the Microsoft campus, and headed back over the Evergreen Bridge to Seattle. When I got to my hotel, I logged on and saw I had E-mail from Bill. It had been written about two hours after I left his office. There was no reference to our having just met. He was responding to mail I had sent him several days earlier, asking what he thought of Henry Ford:

> Ford is not that admirable—he did great things but he was very very narrow minded and was willing to use brute force power too much. His relationship with his family is tragic. His model of the world was plain wrong in a lot of ways. He decided he knew everything he needed to fairly early in his life. ♦

PORTFOLIO

POST NO BILLS

BY ANNA HUSARSKA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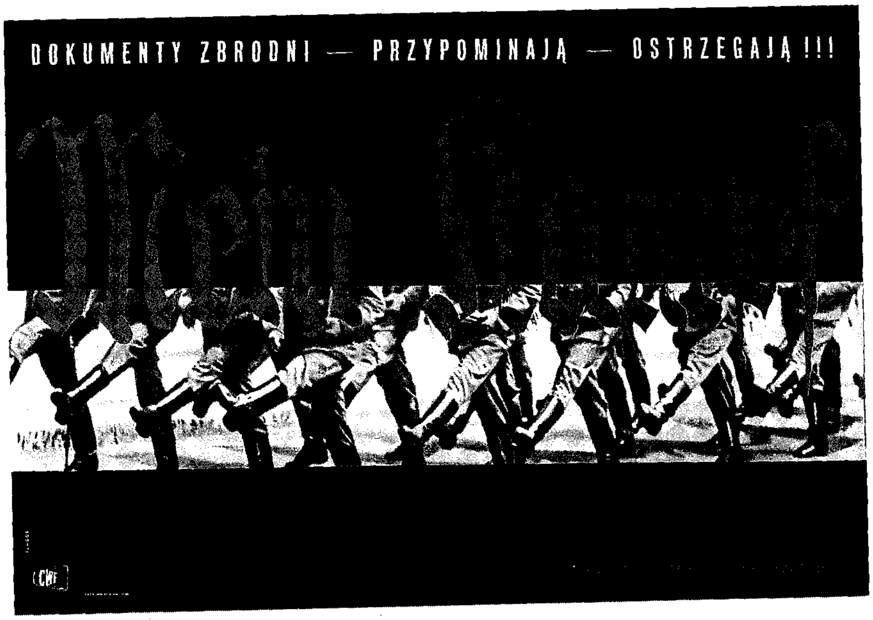
Franciszek Starowieyski, 1973



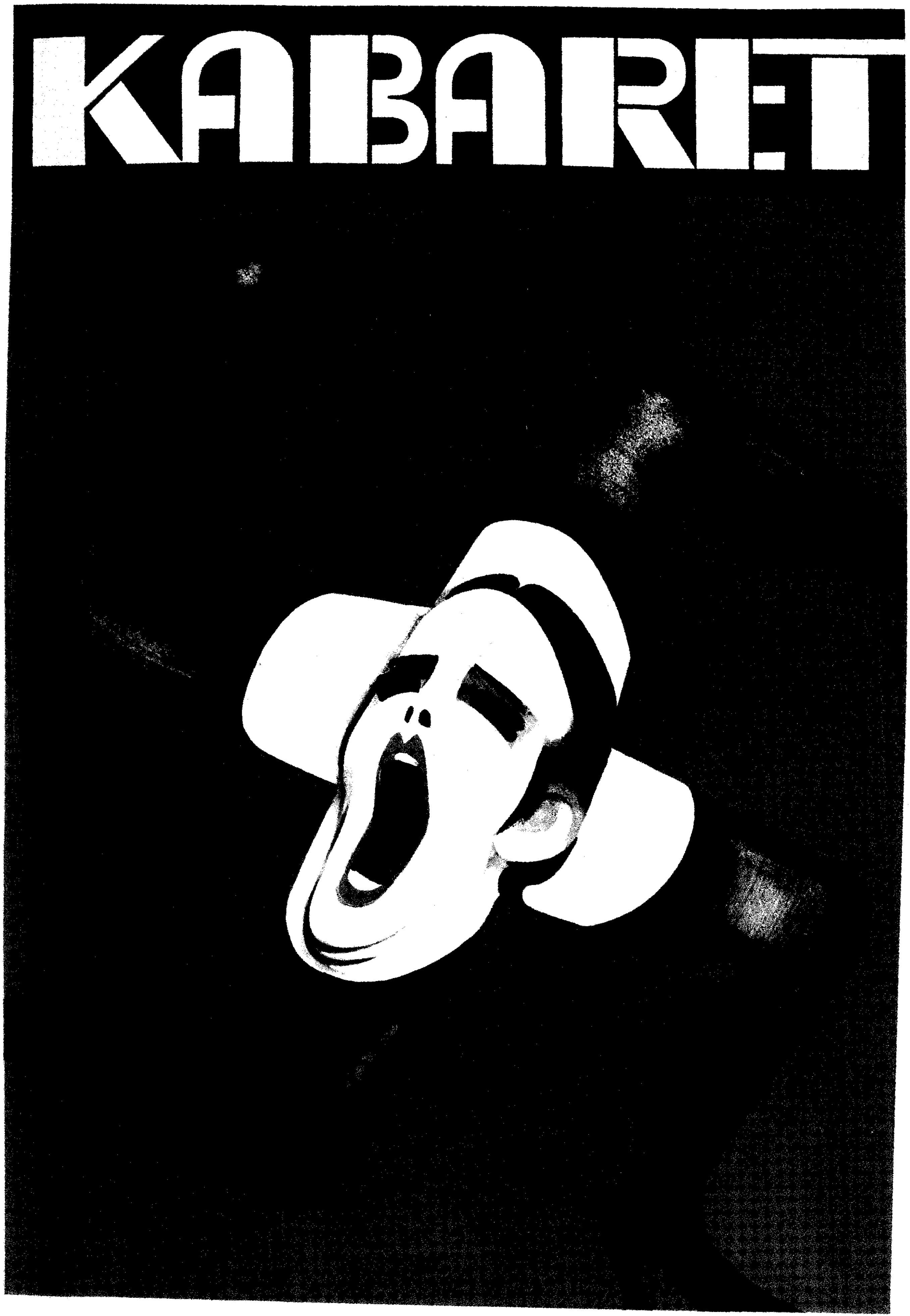
Wojciech Fangor, 1960

EVERY time the Polish Communists did something good, it was unintentional. A case in point is their role as the Medicis of the Polish School of Poster Art. The comrades merely needed a propaganda tool that would deliver the Red gospel to the masses, but they wound up giving their support to what became a world-famous branch of graphic arts. Now Communism in Poland has more or less disappeared, and so have the Polish posters. But, while the crumbling of the ancien régime didn't cause much sorrow, the decay of the posters has provoked great concern among artists, art lovers, and the general public. All Polish graphic artists, though most of them are non-Marxists, agree in blaming capitalism for turning the poster into an almost extinct species.

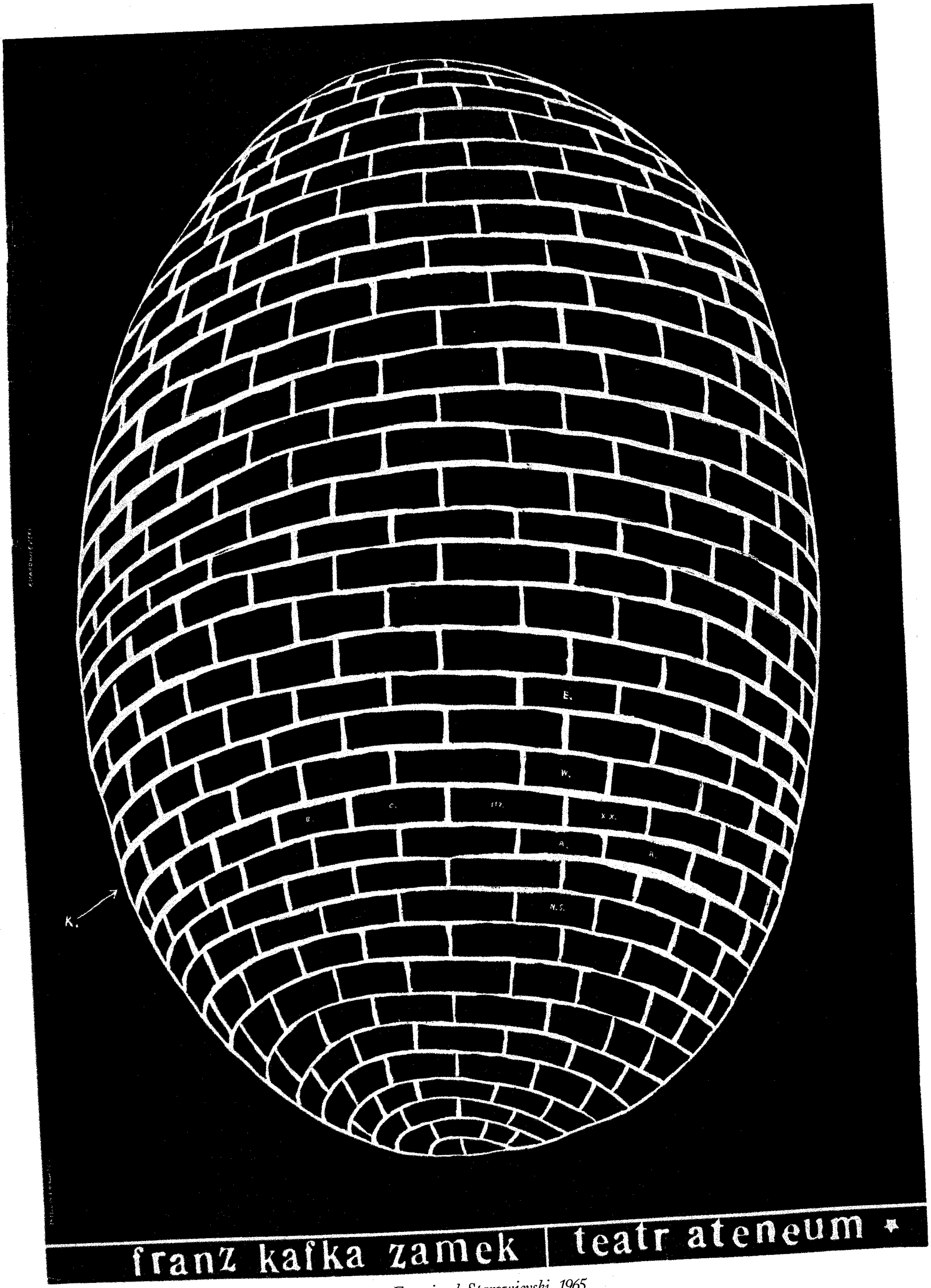
How did it happen that posters thrived under Communism, a system so widely abhorred? It was the result of a particularly felicitous combination of factors. First, the totalitarian state, with unlimited funds at its disposal, turned out to be a good patron. Second, given the general shortages of everything from toilet paper to washing machines, posters weren't really about advertising; they were art for art's sake. Third, the primitive state of printing techniques precluded any easy, conventional use of photographs, so the artists were obliged to be more creative. The isolation from the artistic currents in the West was an advantage, too: Polish artists had to follow their own, original path. And because in Poland there was no art market to speak of (art dealers were considered "rotten bourgeois"), poster-making offered one of the few opportunities for artists and designers to practice their profession.

After a brief concession to socialist realism (posters urging "Let Us All Rebuild Our Country" and admonishing "Keep State Secrets"), artists gained some freedom for themselves. "It was a non-interference pact," recalls Henryk Tomaszewski, who, at eighty, is the unquestioned king of Polish poster-makers. "The artists did not meddle in the construction of socialism, and the

REPRODUCTIONS: MARCO VACCA



Wiktor Górka, 1973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Franciszek Starowieyski, 1965

comrades did not stick their noses in the creative arts."

True, the Communists wanted artists to produce propaganda posters, but Tomaszewski observes that after a while it became part of the challenge to design yet another good, original work for May Day or the October Revolution anniversary or a commemoration of V. I. Lenin. Other unpromising subjects, like security in the workplace and the dangers of alcohol, smoking, or venereal disease, often resulted in particularly outstanding work.

Culture being high on the Communists' agenda, many posters were commissioned for films, theatre performances, concerts, and circuses. It wasn't a matter of advertising; if the state finally imported a Western film, for instance, it was a hit by definition. As for Polish films, they didn't need to be hits; in a planned economy, the making of a movie and the box-office receipts are not connected. Theoretically, the public was unnecessary, and certainly did not have to be wooed.

Censorship, a nuisance in so many other avenues of Polish life, hardly ever interfered with the posters. Jan Lenica, another guru of the graphic arts, points out that once the authorities released a film or a play, they were unlikely to veto the poster accompanying it. "We had a kind of madmen's papers," he says. "They gave us carte blanche, probably because they did not understand much."

The Communists also bankrolled the graphic artists by agreeing to finance numerous poster exhibitions: in 1966, at the initiative of Józef Mroszczak, another of the leading poster-makers, the first International Poster Biennale was held, in Warsaw. Two years later, in Wilanów Park, a poster museum—the first such museum in the world—opened, giving this street art the nobility that comes with institutionalization. (The fourteenth Biennale will be held this year from June 4th to September 20th.)

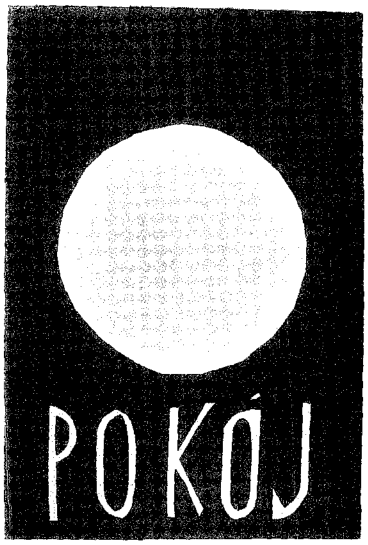
For forty years, on the otherwise gray streets of Communist Poland, the posters—colorful, original, often metaphorical, but easily understandable—were like jewels adorning walls and kiosks. It became fashionable to hang them in kitchens and living rooms, although at the time the only way to obtain a poster was to catch the man with the glue bucket just as he was about to paste one on a fence and offer him a few zlotys or half a litre of vodka.

Then, almost overnight, capitalism arrived in Poland, and, with it, the privatization of cultural institutions, the commercialization of economic life, and the Westernization of public space: three stabs in the back of the poster-maker. The state no longer finances most cultural events; theatres cannot afford to put up artistic posters; and all the new American films are advertised with artwork designed in the United States. The social-propaganda posters have totally vanished (private employers don't need pictorial incentives for their workers; they simply fire the loafers), and the posters for electoral campaigns are designed by marketing specialists rather than by artists.

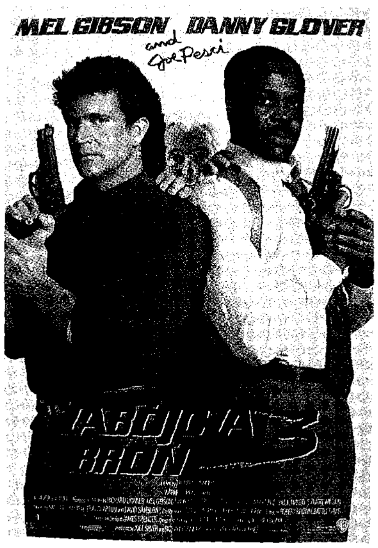
Some graphic artists have found employment in industry. Tomek Szulecki, aged forty, won many awards for his posters in the nineteen-seventies and eighties. Now the heyday is over: in 1992, he was commissioned to do only one poster, and in 1993 none. Today, he works as an advertising designer for a multinational food-processing company, but although his job is well paid, it gives him little satisfaction. "I don't even sign my work," he says. "Because now I am a craftsman, not an artist."

But graphic artists don't give up. Before last year's elections, among the usual graffiti—"Long Live Heavy Metal!" (written by a music fan or perhaps an unemployed steelworker), "The Electrician Is Stupid!" (by an opponent of Polish President Lech Walesa?), and "I Love the Squirrel!" (by an animal-rights activist)—a sign saying "Communism Come Back!" showed up on the streets of Warsaw. The neat, professional look of the lettering suggested that it was the work not of an angry revisionist but of a disillusioned poster-maker. ♦

Dariusz Krupa, 1988



Henryk Tomaszewski and Wojciech Fangor, 1960



Unsigned 1992 poster for the movie "Lethal Weapon 3"

FICTION

FAMILY

BY THOMAS McGUANE

THE wind funnelled down the river valley between the two ranges of mountains and, where the interstate highway hit its first long straightaway in thirty miles, picked up speed. Clay's car lot was right on the frontage road, where land was cheap and where the wind made its uninterrupted rush every season of the year. When winter had not quite arrived, when his blood hadn't thickened and the cattle trucks threw up whirlwinds of cottonwood leaves, the times between customers seemed endless. It was easier in the snowy dead of winter. Now, face close to the window, and leaning one hand against the recycled acoustic tile that lined the walls, he stared down the roofs and hoods of used vehicles in desperate search of a human form.

Before lunch, a rancher came in to complain about a five-year-old three-quarter-ton Dodge that Clay had sold him. The rancher had called it a six-thousand-dollar lemon, and the presence of a pair of fencing pliers in his hand seemed to offer the prospect of mayhem. Clay tried to lighten the tone by saying, "The space shuttle was six billion and *it's* a lemon." But it didn't help. He ended getting sucked into a retroactive guarantee just to keep the guy and his friends' business. With my luck, Clay thought, we'll end up throwing a short block into it, or a rear end.

Clay's father was dying of cancer, and once this rancher, a friend of his father's, had his repair deal in hand, he asked, "How's the old man?" in an excessively warm tone that said, "I'm thinking about him, but I'm thinking about you, too, and it's a lot of pain for everybody."

"He's nearly dead," said Clay, and went back into the shack, with its telephone, cash drawer, and long view of the vehicles. At the far end of the frontage road, the overcast sky had begun to lower. The frozen-yogurt stand was closed for the year, and the metal sign on wheels in front of the tire-repair shop was flipping back and forth. The Dodge truck pulled back onto the road and went by the shack. The rancher gave Clay a wave, which he declined to return.

IT was really no longer a hospital. It was just a place where temporary emergency care could be provided until an ambulance or helicopter could take the patient to Billings. There were three nurses, and a doctor on call. Clay got his father, Bill, in there because Bill had helped found this little hospital, when it was a real hospital, because it was close to home and had views that meant something to him, and because there was not a lot that could be done for Bill anymore. About all that you could do was listen to his stories; and that seemed to be enough. But he could rally a peevish look if you didn't listen closely or interrupted him. That look transformed Bill's weather-beaten face and turned him into the old man who had called the shots for so long that, in the face of his final illness, it was hard for his children to keep their thoughts from the comparative ease that lay ahead and not be torn by guilt.

So Clay sat and listened for as long as he could; and on the weekends his sister, Karen, came over from Powderville and sometimes brought one of the kids. There were three boys, but two were too wild to take that far in a vehicle.

Clay had the rather ungrateful thought that it was the painkillers that they were giving his old man that brought back this surge of memories. Even if it was, it made a kind of sense, his trying to shape the days of his life, as if they could be put in an ammunition tin when he was gone.

Clay smiled to himself as he looked out the window. It was only this last week, waiting in this room and gazing at the bright prairie that began at the parking lot and went out of sight, that he learned that the hospital sat right in the middle of an old Matador pasture where Texans had brought thousands of longhorns to graze among cottonwoods that had Indians buried in their high branches. Clay's great-grandfather was one of those Texans. Karen had a picture of him.

It had begun to rain, and with the rain came the smell of open country. His sister was supposed to have been here already, and he really didn't want to stay any longer. He wanted to go back to work. He still thought he could sell a car today.

"I don't know what's keeping Karen," he said to his father.

"She'll be here. Probably had to wait for Lewis to get out of school."

Clay thought about the self-satisfaction dying people seemed to have. Because they were soon going to be gone forever, they thought they owned the world.

Bill couldn't see who was coming through the door. So when Karen appeared there, she was able to quietly summon Clay. She was a small brunette, very emphatic about everything, and she looked like someone telling you to pull over to the curb. Clay stared at Bill, whose eyes were closed, and eased out into the corridor.

"I've got to take Lewis in to get a shot. He got bit by a skunk and, poor little thing, he's going to have to have that series. So you'll need to hold the fort."

"My God, Karen, I can't stay anymore. I've been here all morning."

"You have to," she said and then just went out. Clay felt sunk. He wasn't bored by all this. It was worse, a kind of repulsion. He would have been glad to take Lewis to see the doctor. Anyway, Bill was awake.

It was just a matter of listening, and waiting. Bill would stare wherever his head was pointed, blank. No, not blank, looking for something. Then—aha!—he'd found it. His eyes caught the light.

IT was the last Mother's Day before World War II. You and Karen was just little bitty. Your ma and me drove into the ranch yard, and Leo, the illegal who worked for me then, said some old fellow had arrived about sundown on a wild horse, *un caballo bravo*, and had rolled out his bedroll under the loading chute, put his head on his saddle, and gone to sleep. He was down there now. I had a feeling that it was old Robert Wood, and it was. Of course, I didn't find him asleep, just caught his eye and told him I would see him in the A.M. I pretty much knew what he was after. He had a band of mares up on the mesa behind our ranch, bronc mares, and they were running out with wild horses there. Folks from town had come out from time to time to chase them around, and they was absolutely wild. I had hoped to gather them for Robert when we had a full complement of help, because it wasn't going to be easy at all.

Several months before this, Robert went out into the sagebrush to catch his red roan stud, who was running with some draft horses by the springs. He had a little pan of oats and a lariat and just got his stud caught when one of the draft horses bit his stud and he got hung up in the rope and dragged. Your uncle O. C. Drury was plowing up wheat stubble about two miles away and saw the dust cloud from where Robert was being dragged. At his age, Robert really never should have lived but he did. He was in the hospital all winter.

I ran into him after he'd healed some, and he said to me in his kind of whiny voice, "Bill, I been in town half a year. Can you carry me home?" So I drove him out to his place and he worried about his horses the whole time, had an unusually strong feeling about them. He was an open-range cowboy, and that's how they was about horses.

By the time we got to his place, he was worn out all over again and needed to go to bed. I went with him into his little shack of a cabin and he stripped down to his long underwear. When he pulled back the covers of his bed, there was a great big nest of mice there, just full of little pink babies. He carefully moved them to one side of the bed and got in beside them, pulled up the covers, and nodded his thanks for the lift.

Gradually, I heard rumors that he was back at work, pulling up his poor fence and halfway cow-proofing it. He brought back his little bunch of black baldies and his bulls. He was even seen crawling around the cockleburs, packing a sprayer with a full tank and a rag tied across his old face. He had always lived and worked alone and was still on the place where he was born.

Robert was an old-time spade-bit horseman. His horses were quick and broncy, and the only safe place around them was on their backs. They were quiet in a herd of cattle and had the lightest noses in the state. O. C. Drury hauled cattle as a sideline, and he hated to haul Robert's calves. Invariably, he'd arrive in the ranch yard in mid-October and Robert would complain, "O. C., I'm so shorthanded just now. Would you catch up that old bay and help me bring these cattle in? We'll sort them off right here and now." O. C. would feel he had to do it, but he would crawl up on an old bay or old sorrelly who would know immediately it wasn't Robert Wood, and one false move and the bronc ride was on.

So I let Robert sleep through the night, and by the time I woke, just before sunup, I could smell his fire and coffee. Then in a bit I could hear Leo's voice, and I knew the two of them were drinking coffee. I decided I'd make a good breakfast for the three of us. I threw on the lights and got dressed, went into the kitchen, and started cooking. I knew I didn't want to put on a breakfast for everyone. I was buying time, and I still hoped I could talk Robert out of his dangerous plan to bring these broncs down off the mesa with such a small crew.

Leo, now, was a typical illegal, hardworking and terrific bashful. To get him to come into the house took an act of Congress. That's the way they are. The minute they're comfortable in the house, you can expect their family to begin arriving from Old Mexico in a parade of jalopies. From then on it is your main occupation to live in your new little Mexican village. That's why they are reluctant at first to come into your house. They know what you are getting yourself into, even if you don't. As they see it, they are protecting you against your own generosity and what it may lead to. It may lead to your becoming a Mexican slave.

That day, though, Leo came in with Robert, who had to be helped up the steps. I was relieved to see that Robert's physical condition might limit our overreaching with these wild horses. And I had made a big enough breakfast to instigate some morning smoking and reminiscing, which Robert could do about as well as anybody.

I served the two of them and asked Leo in Spanish if he thought the old man was going to be able to get on his horse. Instead, Robert answered. "Don't you worry none about *el viejo*. I teethed on a saddle horn." I just laughed—a little embarrassed like, naturally—and we went ahead and ate.

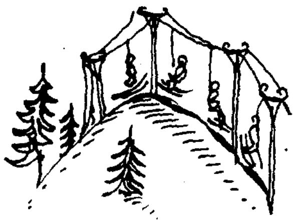
Leo was a small Indian-looking fellow from Sonora, and he listened to his *norteño* music whenever he was alone. I know he was homesick. His hair fell in bangs over an Indian face. His hands were absolutely square from hard work. I tried to joke with him, but he didn't really have any sense of humor I could understand. He was always serious. He couldn't read or write but he had a perfect memory. Once, I lost a pocketknife, which I didn't discover until Leo and I had walked two hours back to my truck, when I discovered it gone. Leo ran back in the dark and picked it up without really ever having to search for it. When he felt I was pushing him too hard, he said, "*Weddamini*," which I finally figured out was his version of "wait a minute," and I only sorted that out when he started saying "*Goddammi!*" when he was mad.

"Mighty nice of you to fix this," Robert said, holding part of his breakfast out at me on a fork. He had an old-fashioned, long-nosed, English-looking face, and you could see a little blue vein in the thin skin of his forehead. Robert was a horseman, an old puncher, and he had outlived his time, which had become a time of fences and farming. It was kind of amazing he had held on to his ways for so long. He couldn't have done such a thing if he hadn't been so old and if he hadn't been a bachelor. He saw alfalfa the way modern people see the drug plague. To him, it was a phony, green, water-greedy murderer of the Old West. The other thing that set Robert apart—amazing when you think of how many people around here were kind of interested in him and his life—was that he didn't seem to have any interest in himself. You couldn't hardly get anything out of him. He only was interested in what was going on right now that minute.

I suppose he was seventy-five. The

big hat he wore was an old Stetson, just the way it came out of the box—no crease, no nothing. He wore it year round. He wouldn't wear a straw hat in the summer. He said a straw hat was a farmer's hat. He said that is what you wore when you went out to view the alfalfa.

A meal, including that breakfast, is for laying out a plan. Robert said, "Here is the way to go about it. We'll all go up the switchback together to the mesa. When we get there, I'll ride around the crack"—the crack was a deep washout that lies on the east side of the mesa; there's a slope beyond it that could have been an escape route for those mares—"and hide in the brush. You two get out around them mares"—he pronounced it *mars*—"and start them home. I'll make sure they come back down the trail. When they get down here to the flat, some*body* will have to get outside these horses and thataway turn them into your corrals. I hope you don't mind me using your corrals. Course you don't."



I really doubted that Robert could turn these horses at the crack. Wild horses, which these canners nearly was, would consider jumping that crack with the possible outcome of breaking their necks, whereas a horse and rider combined would not consider any such of a thing. So that's where I guessed our story would end. In which case I would be happy to smooth those mares down the gentle back slope of the mesa, lock them in the neighbors', and gather them when we had us a suitable crew.

The real relief was we would avoid the situation below the switchback when the horses got out on the flat. Here is where someone would have to ride out around that wild band, outrun them on broken ground, and turn them into the corrals. And I wondered how all of this might look to Robert, who kind of despised our horsemanship. I mean this man worked for Niobrara, XIT, N Bar. He was one of the immortals! Those folks had a fairly unstinting way of using themselves in a situation that would make most people feel pretty reserved.

The first thing we needed to do was to get old crooked Robert on horseback. He led his sorrel mare out of the pen behind the scales and tied her to a plank of the chute. She was a little sickle-hocked, which he probably liked, but had good withers and short pasterns, real cow-horse-looking, kind of coon-footed and low-crouped.

It was painful to watch him saddle her. He threw the Indian blanket up all right, but when he lifted that old Miles City Cogshall saddle up we felt how much it hurt him and yet knew we oughtn't to help. He bridled her with a little Kelly Brothers grazing bit and led her around to the front of the chute. I glanced at Leo. He threw one rein up around the horn and looped the other around the corner post of the loading chute. She stood all right, but that wasn't no kid's horse. She was bad as anything Robert forced O. C. Drury to get on. She had her nostrils blowed out and plenty of white around her eyes.

Along about in here, Robert Wood walks around to the holding pen, squeaks that old gate open, goes inside, and next time we see him, he's crawling up the chute, out the end, and onto his horse. She snorted and backed away, and he hung down around her neck and got his other rein. When he sat up in the saddle, he had the reins plaited through the fingers of his left hand and he was in charge of the whole department store. He just lifted his hand about three-sixteenths of an inch and she sat down on her hocks and backed clear across the ranch yard. Then he straightened up, threw her some slack, and she stood square to the world, looking for work. Had it of been O. C. Drury, she'd of bucked his ass over the granary.

We headed up single file, and I stayed a little behind to watch Robert. His shoulders were back, and he sat ramrod-straight in the middle of his saddle, his boots plumb home in his old iron oxbows. Every once in a while, he turned real slow in his saddle and gave my Mexican a good looking-at. It wasn't long before we were on top.

Leo loped out to the west and made a little dust. His small form sank, and then nearly disappeared as he made a big ride around the horses. They had wheeled up to watch him and only began to disperse and feed as the circle he made came to seem too grand to concern them. I was able to ride straight back to the far side of the mesa, and by the time I got there, Leo was closing in my direction, and those horses, two miles off, had already begun to drift away from us.

I know we meant to ease them on out of there, but it just wasn't anything easy to it. Those mares started off across that flattop, and in two jumps they were smoking. However far off horses can see each other, they're communicating, and the horses under Leo and me caught that gust of fear and like to snaked out from under us and made for that wild band.

Leo went crabwise toward the horses, and his horse was about to start bucking. My gelding just tried to pack his head in my lap, but since this was a vice of his at other times, and as I was unwilling to break a whiskey bottle full of water over his thick skull the way most folks do to get their heads down, I had him in a running martingale and chain curb, and he plain had to look out through his bridle and be a gentleman. So I got the best of him, and Leo his, and we managed to stay to the rear of those mares, who by now had such a cloud of dust behind them that it just seemed to drift off into that day's weather like from a grass fire. And I'm sure that ever since we watched Robert float off, we knew how coarse-broke we had our ponies.

It was clear there was no reasonable way to turn them down the road. And even if Robert had been prepared to do so, he was at that time nowhere in sight. But the mares must have winded him, because they slowed down enough for us to close on them somewhat, and even appear to drive them orderly like. The right place to get their attention and make them turn was that big earthquake fault ahead of us, which a man couldn't cross with a horse. So we weren't going to turn these horses. We were just going to throw them off the slope ahead and scatter them out among those little ranches along the river, where they'd play hell with the farming.

Right here that all changed. Way past that crack in the ground, Robert broke out of the brush on his horse, the sorrel mare coming out in a flurry, sage and greasewood staubs cracking off in the air around her. Those wild horses just froze. Either *they* would leap that crack and fly past him or Robert could leap that crack and turn them down toward the house. It was that simple. We knew very well Robert couldn't consider such a thing, and before it became any kind of a problem we had an opportunity to look this band over. There was sixteen horses, and about ten of them were pretty uniform-looking sorrel horses that showed a kinship to Robert's mount. The remainder was nothing but cayuses—interbred, Roman noses—and had big hairy feet all out of proportion to their size. Back at the time of the Boer War, some remount outfit had turned draft studs among these sorrel animals to put some size on them, but it all ended up in their feet and heads. They even seemed to hurt Leo's eyes.

Presently, they boiled back toward us and we whooped and hollered. Leo took down his slicker and got them bunched up once more toward the trail, where they didn't want to go. Robert was yelling, "Drive 'em, boys!" and so we did. They advanced his way like a bright-colored little cyclone, and just before they broke around him Robert spurred his mare forward, hollering and stretched up over her neck. She closed on that earthquake fault just burning a hole in the wind, and when she reached it she curved up, into the air, Robert easing back into the saddle with his stirrups pushed out in front toward the landing he hoped they would both make. And as long ago as that has come to be, I can still see the utter blackness of that opening in the ground, which really should have been Robert's grave, and that old man floating above its grasp, apparently seventeen years old, and his smart old mare reaching her long beautiful legs for the far shore. Afterward, when I asked Leo how long she had been in the air, he said, "*Tres horas. Más o menos.*"

Well, they made it. And she sat down into her stop in a cloud of dust and just confounded those wild horses. In fact, Robert leaned up with both hands on the pommel of his saddle, the deep slack of his reins hanging under the sorrel's neck, and took time to count them. Then we resumed, a very orderly trot down the ranch road gazing over the packed, hurrying backs of the horses. Those mares recognized they was back in Mr. Robert Wood's remuda and were relaxed as could be.

When they were corralled, Robert said in his singsong voice, "That sure is a relief. I was afraid we might have trouble with them." He rode over to where he'd left his bedroll and paused there. "Bill," he said, "I was going to ask your Mexican to cheek this mare while I slid off, but I'm confusing her with her mother. She was bad to paw at you when you got down. But she's over there in that corral."

THEN his father grinned, a different grin. Clay imagined that his father's expression indicated he hadn't meant to hold him up so long.

"I'm going to have to leave you, Dad."

"I went on and on, didn't I?"

Clay didn't say anything at first. Then he said, "Karen's supposed to arrive."

Clay met Karen in the lobby. Lewis was with her, and from the looks of him the shot hadn't gone well. He was about eight, redheaded, and a dramatic boy. Karen told him to go see his grandfather and that she would be along in half an hour.

When he ran off down the hall, feet flying out behind him, Clay said, "In a half hour?"

"Yeah, we've got to pick out a plot. They're holding three of them but they're pressing me."

THE cemetery was near the Yellowstone, and it had a dashing mountain brook that wound through it like a little silver train, speeding through the spruce trees that shaded the graves. The first rows were pioneers, and off to the south end was a kind of Boot Hill that held the gamblers, lawmen, prostitutes, and all five members of the Bellmuir Gang of horse-and-cattle thieves. The graveyard got more modern as you moved toward the mountains, finally including a few people Clay had gone to high school with. There was the grave of Charlie Derby, killed by a rodeo bull, and Milly Makkinen, homecoming queen, dead of a drug overdose.

"Karen, look at this." Clay was standing at a grave. Karen came over and read the headstone.

"Nobody I know," she said. "He had a nice long life, though, didn't he?"

"Dad never told you the story of Robert Wood? 'The last of the open-range cowboys'?"

"Nope."

"Oh. Well, I just heard it. I just heard it today."

Karen walked over to a newer area, an unoccupied area. It had been untended long enough to let some wild timothy spring up and some cheat grass, too.

"We can have up to five right here."

"This is the way to be in the real-estate business."

"That's about the size of it," said Karen, and her head dropped. Clay put his arms around her. He could think of all the reasons she might be crying, but he could never rise above his own sense of injustice. He never mourned, he became indignant.

"Nobody's got a lease," Clay said into her hair. He was thinking of the guy beating him out of an overhaul, old friend of Dad's, a son of a bitch like everyone else.

"You're so damn glib." She pushed away from him. "We'll take those, unless you feel strongly against it."

"Take those what?" he asked absently.

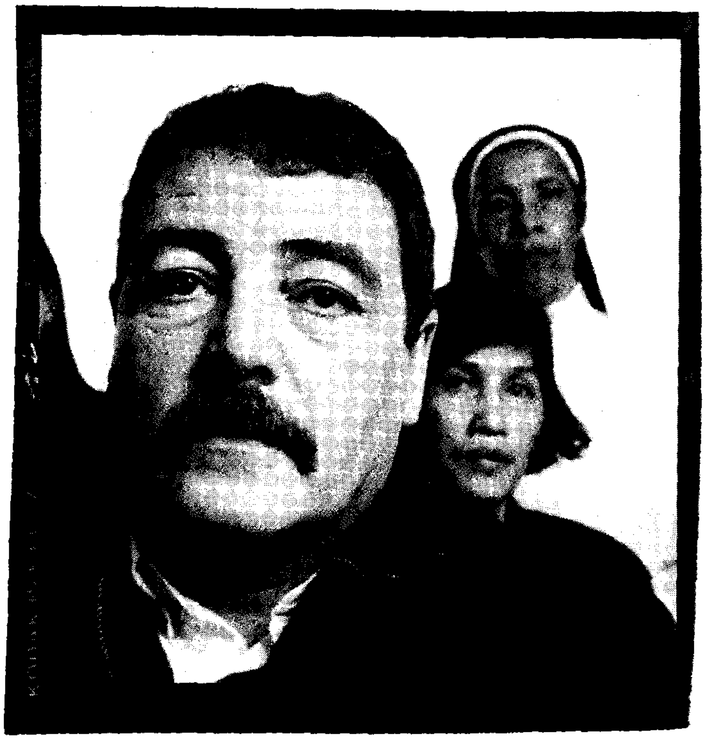
She said, "Plots."

CLAY had to sit up with Bill again. The night nurse let him in, obstructing his way up the hall just long enough to exchange a glance. She had high, arching eyebrows, which gave her a surprised look, and she had put some preparation in her hair that made it appear continuously damp. After a certain point in a long illness, the visitors become the patients, as though the primary effects of the disease were already too obvious to bear noticing. He thought she'd probably start screaming if he kissed her. Or, these days, write in to some magazine.

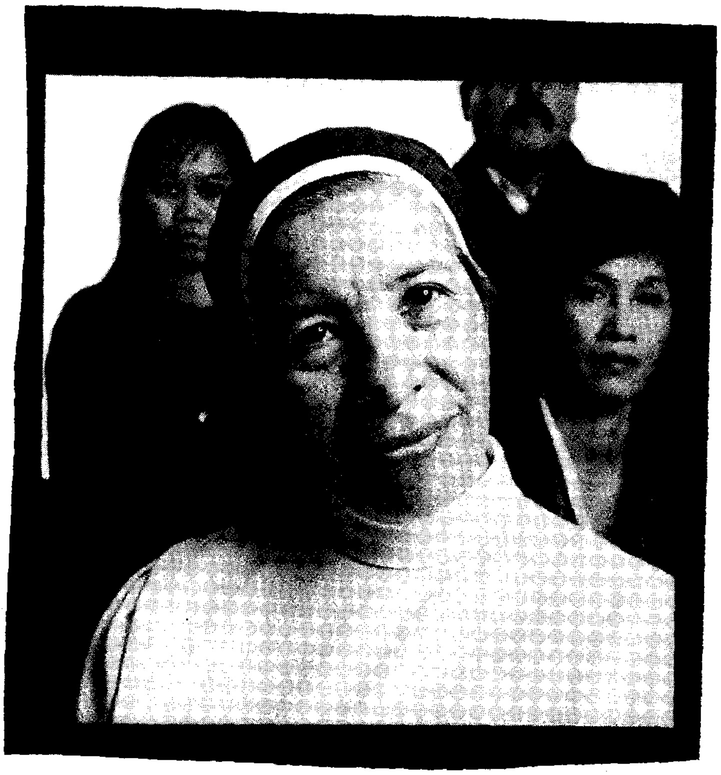
Clay stopped in the doorway. He looked at his father's sleeping face. He seemed at peace. Hell, Clay thought, he probably *is* at peace. Dad always did what he felt like. He might as well go now. This terrible situation had endured so long it had lost its fearfulness for everyone, even for Bill. Clay suddenly felt a seething ache that he was going to lose his father. It surprised him.

It was out of love, and even admiration, that Clay said aloud, "Why don't you just die?"

Bill opened the blue eyes Clay never got. "Clay," Bill said, "I'm doing the best I can." ♦



Father Matías Camuñas Marchante, Venezuela



Sister Nohemy Palencia, Colombia

SENTRIES

BY LAWRENCE WESCHLER

Task: to be where I am.
Even when I'm in this solemn and absurd
role: I am still the place
where creation does some work on itself.
—from Tomas Tranströmer's "Sentry Duty," translated from the Swedish by Robert Bly.

TYRANNIES all over the world exist in the ironclad certainty that people are nothing more than meat on bones. Anything that their subjects are or have beyond that exists at the sheerest whim of the regime. Indeed, the notion that human beings have absolute rights simply by virtue of their humanity—the right, for instance, not to be tortured—arises initially as a wild, untethered assertion in the face of aeons of stark evidence to the contrary. But it is a magical assertion.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." The truly revolutionary thought in that declaration is contained not so much in the words "truths," "self-evident," or "created equal" as in the calm self-certainty of the opening words: "We hold." The text does not launch out with "It is manifestly self-evident that" or with some similar construction, as strict logic might seem to dictate. In fact, the self-evidence of the assertion remains hidden, fugitive, immanent at best, until people rise up to embrace it, to hold fast to its insistence (mutually pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor in the process). It is holding such truths to be self-

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD AVEDON

Peter Loggenberg, South Africa

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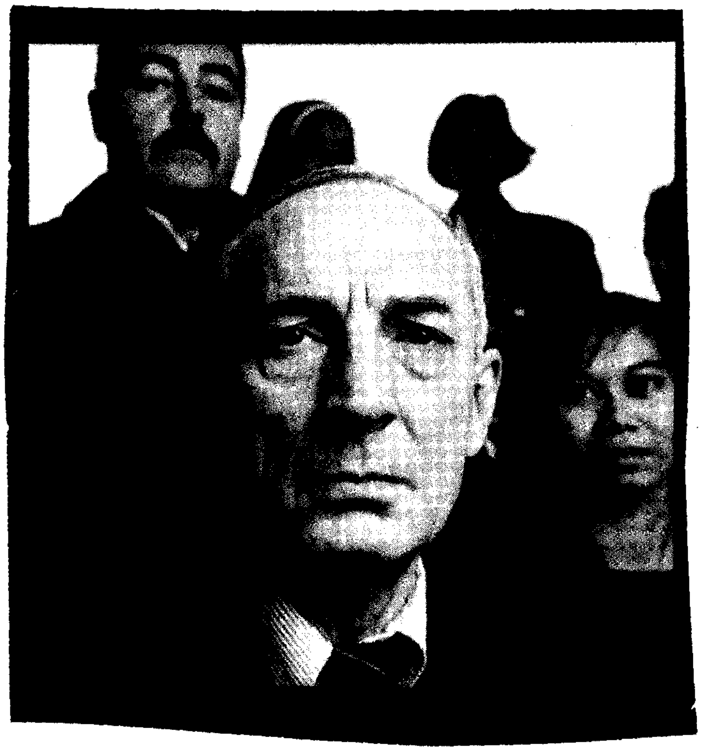
Florence Butegwa, Zimbabwe

Cecilia Jimenez, Philippines



Yuri Schmidt, Russia

evident that first makes them so—and, more specifically, doing so in concert, alongside others.

Forty-five years ago last month, the members of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Most of that organization's member states, however, instantly took to dismissing the document's ringing assertions as so many dead words, and it was left to individual citizens in those states, often through public stands of almost preposterous courage, to realize the declaration's most basic premises. Theirs is a labor that remains far short of completion, of course. But fundamental to that work—the foundation on which everything else has risen—has been the simple, endlessly repeated act of bearing witness, of compiling accurate and reliable information on the fate of the victims of the human-rights depredations of renegade regimes. Such monitoring has usually had to take place in the midst of those depredations, and it is almost always very dangerous work.

Each December, the New York-based organization Human Rights Watch commemorates the anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights by gathering together a dozen or so human-rights monitors from countries throughout the world—the very people whose vigilance makes the rest of the human-rights movement possible. (Often, their trips to New York constitute the first time these people have ever been out of their homelands. And not infrequently they are prevented from coming at all—as in the case, this year, of China's Liu Gang and Syria's Salama George Kila, both of whom are in prison.) The sentries come from all walks of life: lawyers, social workers, peasant organizers, priests. This year's crew even included an actual sentry—Peter Loggenberg, a prison guard at Pollsmoor, South Africa, who helped to found an organization that monitored living conditions in the depths of the apartheid regime's security institutions. A fellow-monitor of Loggenberg's, the Cairo journalist Bahey el-Din Hassan, operates within perhaps even narrower (and ever-narrowing) confines. The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights, which he heads, regularly manages to alienate both the Mubarak regime and the Islamic-fundamentalist movement, upon which that regime has been lavishing its increasingly extra-constitutional attentions. The regime shows little patience with Bahey's insistence on the rule of law, and the fundamentalists have nothing but contempt for such "cosmopolitan" ravings, either. Nevertheless, Bahey persists.

All the monitors have their stories. Rwanda's Monique Mujawamariya's is typical of those of this year's crew. Trained as a social worker, she helped found and now directs an organization that has been painstakingly documenting a pattern of government-sponsored atrocity and slaughter across her small east-central African homeland. When members of Human Rights Watch visited the country, she led them directly to a recent massacre site. Later, when the delegation was at the airport, preparing to leave, one of its members saw her being pulled aside by the regime's chief torturer. Subsequently reaching her by telephone, the Human Rights Watch people asked what he had wanted. "Oh, he just said that if he sees his name in your report he's going to have me killed," she told them. This was no idle threat: her face already bears the scars of a car "accident." Understandably alarmed, they asked her what they ought to do. "Why, print it, of course," Mujawamariya replied, without a moment's hesitation. And they did.

Such bravado ought not to work. How can it? How can mere vigilance, the puny insistence on the rule of law in the face of armored, historically entrenched tyranny, ever make any difference? We hold these truths—these truths and nothing else: aside from them we are naked before power. Nothing is there except the bold, scary insistence that something is there: this ineffable but essential thing called human rights. And yet, when enough people start insisting forcefully enough on those rights, then, over time, a light does begin to shine in the middle of the dark—a substantial light that not only illumines but actually begins to *melt* tyrannies. It's uncanny.

But one should be clear about the nature of that light: the Bible notwithstanding, the Truth by itself never made anyone free. It has always been *people*, sentries like these, witnessing and declaring the truth, who work that magic. ◆

Bahey el-Din Hassan, Egypt

Monique Mujawamariya, Rwanda

rey Chanphallara, Cambodia

Mary Rock, Israeli-occupied West Bank

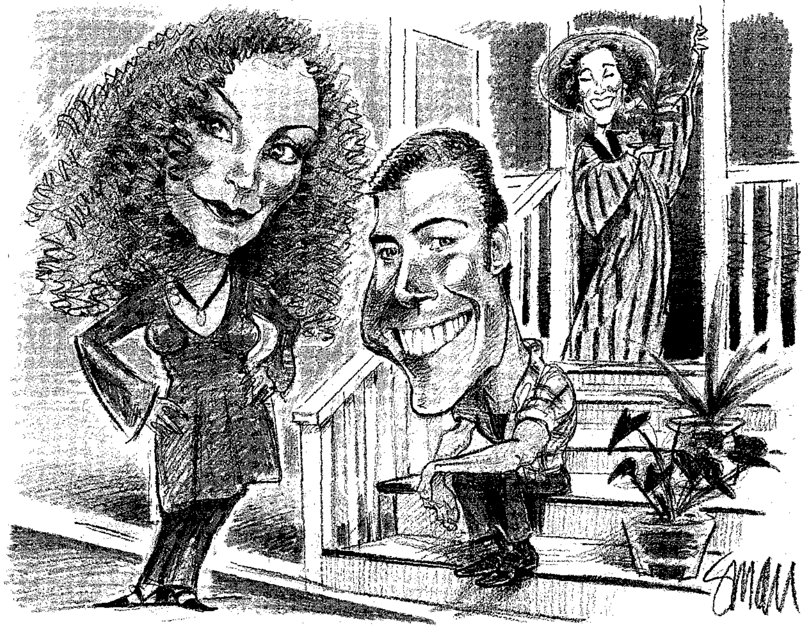
THE CRITICS

ON TELEVISION

A TIME TO BOOGIE

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

"THE seventies suck," I remember people complaining during the seventies, as if the decade were an indignity levied solely on them. (It wasn't called "the me decade" for nothing.) The seventies were bemoaned as a betrayal of sixties passion and idealism, a trashy postscript that found the broad torrents of pop culture siphoned off into tinkling displays of dandyism, self-parody, and androgyny. Instead of Pete Townshend and Jimi Hendrix sacrificing their guitars on pagan altars, we had David Bowie all aglitter, the New York Dolls in downtown drag, midnight showings of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show." "Decadence" reëmerged as a worry word. Critics compared the decade to Weimar Germany, as the spirit of cabaret sought refuge in an opium den. (Lou Reed accommodated the Zeitgeist by recording the album "Berlin," the closest thing on vinyl to a Fassbinder film—listening to it was like watching the wallpaper turn black.) The unravelling of Watergate actually had some pundits muttering, "Fascism."



Swinging seventies: Chloe Webb, Marcus D'Amico, and Olympia Dukakis in "Tales of the City."

Even in the darkest hours of President Nixon's five-o'clock shadow, the downbeat assessments of the decade struck me as overdone. As Albert Goldman has observed, the only cure for decadence is a rise of new energies, and there were new energies galore in the seventies. How could a decade that gave us the Rolling Stones' strung-out masterpiece "Exile on Main Street," the epic scrotum hollers of Led Zeppelin, the booty-shake of disco and funk, and the rash of punk rock be dismissed as dull and enervated? Pop music wasn't the only place where there was movement. The seventies were the last time when movies seemed signed with the sweat of a director's brow rather than packaged by a committee of cellular phones. Martin Scorsese, Brian De Palma, Francis Ford Coppola, and Robert Altman invested each film with an integral vision. Looking back on the music and the movies, one is impressed by their personal stake, their quick incision.

Certainly the seventies are being thought of less and less as the sixties' tacky sister. We are now being subjected to a seventies revival. "Saturday Night Fever" has replaced "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" as a cult favorite on the midnight circuit, with Los Angeles patrons dressing in disco duds. The Village People and their hit "Y.M.C.A." are enjoying a comeback, boosted by a parody in "Wayne's World 2." Guns N' Roses have recorded an album of punk anthems. Some of this is simple nostalgia, as the baby busters now have their own patch of history to protect. (Richard Linklater's "Dazed and Confused" cuddled the heavy-metal seventies the way "American Graffiti" did Beach Boys car culture.) Some of it is suburban lore with a smirk. After all, it was the seventies that gave us shopping-mall culture and its fashion crimes: lime-green polyester suits, Farrah Fawcett shags, clunky platform shoes, flared jeans. In the urban infernos, we had the pimp look, which is also now good for a giggle. (There are black men who to this day deny they ever wore pointy sideburns, even when they're presented with the proof!) For younger people, the decade is still close enough in time to feel familiar, far enough away to seem trippy.

Productions on both sides of the Atlantic are now paying homage to the seventies. In America, PBS's "American Playhouse" series is broadcasting a three-part adaptation of Armistead Maupin's best-selling serial novel "Tales of the City" on January 10th, 11th, and 12th. In England, the BBC has scandalized the tabloids and flustered the conservative Asian community with a four-part adaptation of Hanif Kureishi's sex-mad multiracial novel "The Buddha of Suburbia," which is currently being shopped around to American buyers. Both series so accurately resurrect the clothes, hair styles, and décor of the seventies that it's hard not to shudder.

For different reasons, "Tales of the City" might put a quiver in Jesse Helms' cheeks. Why, he and others on the right may thunder, is public television—supported by our hard-squandered tax dollars—presenting a series that mocks middle-class values? A series that winks its false eyelashes at recreational drug use ("Have another toot—things go better with coke"), adultery, and homosexuality? This spectacle features guys go-go dancing onstage in their underwear, a lesbian couple practically *kissing*, and marijuana cigarettes being dispensed as party favors. It has more butt-nakedness than "NYPD Blue." Anticipating flak, each episode is prefaced with a cute disclaimer, which states, "The following program depicts a bygone era; an era of innocence; an era of sex, drugs and rock & roll. . . . Some of this material may not be suitable for all viewers. Discretion is advised for anyone who missed the 1970s." A tribute to the upper-bohemian flair of San Francisco, where there's enough affluence to support a standing army of arty poseurs, "Tales of the City" does have an almost old-fashioned sense of daring, like an aging flapper kicking up her heels. The pursuit of pleasure has taken on a tone of privilege. "Tales" remains unrepentant to the end in its cultivation of bliss. The final shot has Olympia Dukakis, playing an Auntie Mame life force that won't quit (her butterfly wings sweep across the screen), laying a fat joint on the fresh grave of her married lover. "Have fun, dear," she says. "It's Colombian."

If the screen seems fuzzy in "Tales of the City," it isn't because of the pot fumes. The director, Alastair Reid, is attempting to emulate the grainy, absurdist drift of Robert Altman's films, where the characters bump against one another like balloons in medium shot. The cast is certainly an odd, Altmanesque assortment, ranging from the rock singers Syd Straw and Country Joe McDonald to such old troupers as Dukakis, Donald Moffat, Paul Dooley, and Nina Foch, with cameo appearances by McLean Stevenson, Edie Adams, Karen Black, and Mary Kay Place, and additional bitchery supplied by Paul Bartel, Ian McKellen, and my former colleague at *Vanity Fair* Kevin Sessums. (It's strange seeing somebody you used to work with walking around in a towel.) As an innocent miss from the Midwest, the Alice in this woozy Wonderland, Laura Linney untugs a shy, sidelong Mariette Hartley smile as she engages each exotic new plot development. She alone has charm. The connecting strands of the characters' lives coarsen with each heavy scrape of Reid's camera. Trapped in a soap bubble of period details and dated wisecracks, "Tales" doesn't transcend its time warp. The seventies seem projected on a rearview screen as the characters make their appointed rounds.

The strongest throb of emotion comes when "Tales" quotes from Alfred Hitchcock, the series' other honorary godfather. Over the opening shots we hear an evocation of Bernard Herrmann's aching score for Hitchcock's "Vertigo," the psychological thriller starring James Stewart and Kim Novak, which was set in San Francisco. (A character later indicates the building where Kim Novak lived.) The climax of "Tales of the City" comes when Linney confronts a damp pervert named Norman (Stanley Desantis). You can tell he's a pervert because he wears his clear plastic raincoat like a collapsed condom. The scene where they grapple at the cliffs is a veritable restaging of "Vertigo," with Herrmann's score again echoed. It's a grievous aesthetic miscalculation. In American film, Hitchcock's "Vertigo" is the supreme prose-poem lament of love and loss as eternal recurrence. It's a movie that exerts the spell of myth, its inchoate churnings far deeper and more powerful than any shifts in fashion, sexual politics, or Freudian interpretation. The show's cute sampling of "Vertigo" throws us outside the story, accenting how frothy it is by contrast.

HANIF KUREISHI could never be accused of trafficking in froth. The author of the screenplays for "My Beautiful Laundrette" and "Sammy and Rosie Get Laid" and the writer-director of the misbegotten "London Kills Me," Kureishi specializes in finger-painting murals of scenes from capitalism's death throes. Chaos rules the streets, a burning car on every block. It's a genre of social realism in which all the sexual, religious, racial, and class boundaries are blurred in a righteous orgy of converging appetites. Wiggling bodies are stacked in bed like sandwiches—sandwiches that seem to be eating themselves. (The visual coup in "Sammy and Rosie" was three couples simultaneously copulating on a split screen.) "The Buddha of Suburbia" has the trademark Kureishi bravado: a mutual-masturbation scene between two teen-agers, a four-way sexual romp (you can't tell the players without a scorecard), vigorous coupling in the back garden, a dominatrix acting nasty. But if the flesh is able the spirit seems bereft. The characters in "Buddha," like those in "Tales," have low centers of gravity, like beanbag chairs that have settled.

What subdues both these seventies flashbacks is a sexual *tristesse* based on hindsight. The swinging we see is doomed, as AIDS waits in the wings. The filmmakers know that the party will soon be over, even if the characters don't. They've factored in their own sense of futility. ("Buddha" also bears the shadow of Margaret Thatcher's election as Prime Minister and the long harangue of Tory rule.) The depressant they offer the audience is a split dosage. To those who lived through the seventies, "Tales" and "Buddha" are saying: "Remember how great it was when you could get stoned and laid without a lot of hassle?" To younger folks in the audience, they're saying: "Look at what you missed—this is the fun you'll never have." Feel bad, everybody! It's as if they were collaborating on a docudrama called "The Day the Blow Jobs Died." The kids lining up to see "Saturday Night Fever" in L.A. have a better idea: Dig the seventies in its original flash, untouched by age and afterthought. Watch John Travolta take the dance floor in his trim white suit and stop the world cold. ♦

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MUSICAL EVENTS

BLACK RIDER, GRAY BUTTERFLY

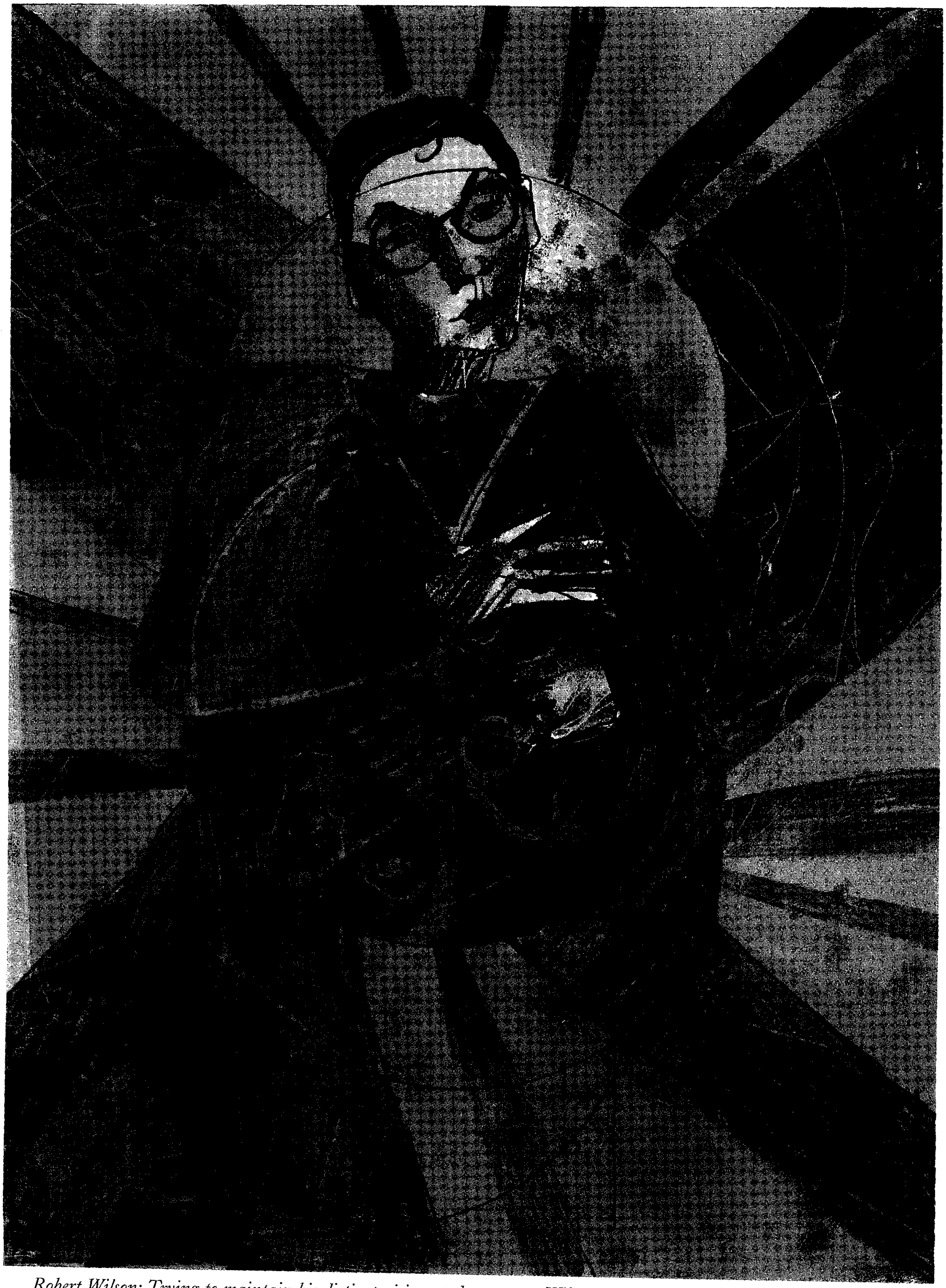
BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

At the end of November, Robert Wilson had two productions opening almost simultaneously on opposite sides of the Atlantic: a revival at the Brooklyn Academy of Music of "The Black Rider," the product of his collaboration with Tom Waits, William Burroughs, and the history of German Expressionism, and a new staging at the Opéra Bastille, in Paris, of "Madame Butterfly." Six of his productions, including the "Butterfly," are scheduled for next season at the Bastille, and new works for Florence and with Philip Glass are in progress. Hip, hop; hip, hop. This may be normal life for your average stage director, but the whole point about Mr. Wilson used to be that he was not your average stage director. His attempt to make himself into just that—to adapt himself to a pattern of routine and overwork—is presenting a bizarre spectacle of artistic suicide, because what happens when you do too much is that you do too little. Shows get put on, as this "Black Rider" was put on, slackly, without people in the audience being able to feel—as if the force were drilling through their heads—the intense pressure of the director's eyes to vivify each gesture, each move, each shift of an item of décor. For the moment, we've lost what used to distinguish Mr. Wilson's stage vision. I miss the length, too. And why the rush? To give us a restaging of "The Addams Family" and a version of Puccini's melodrama.

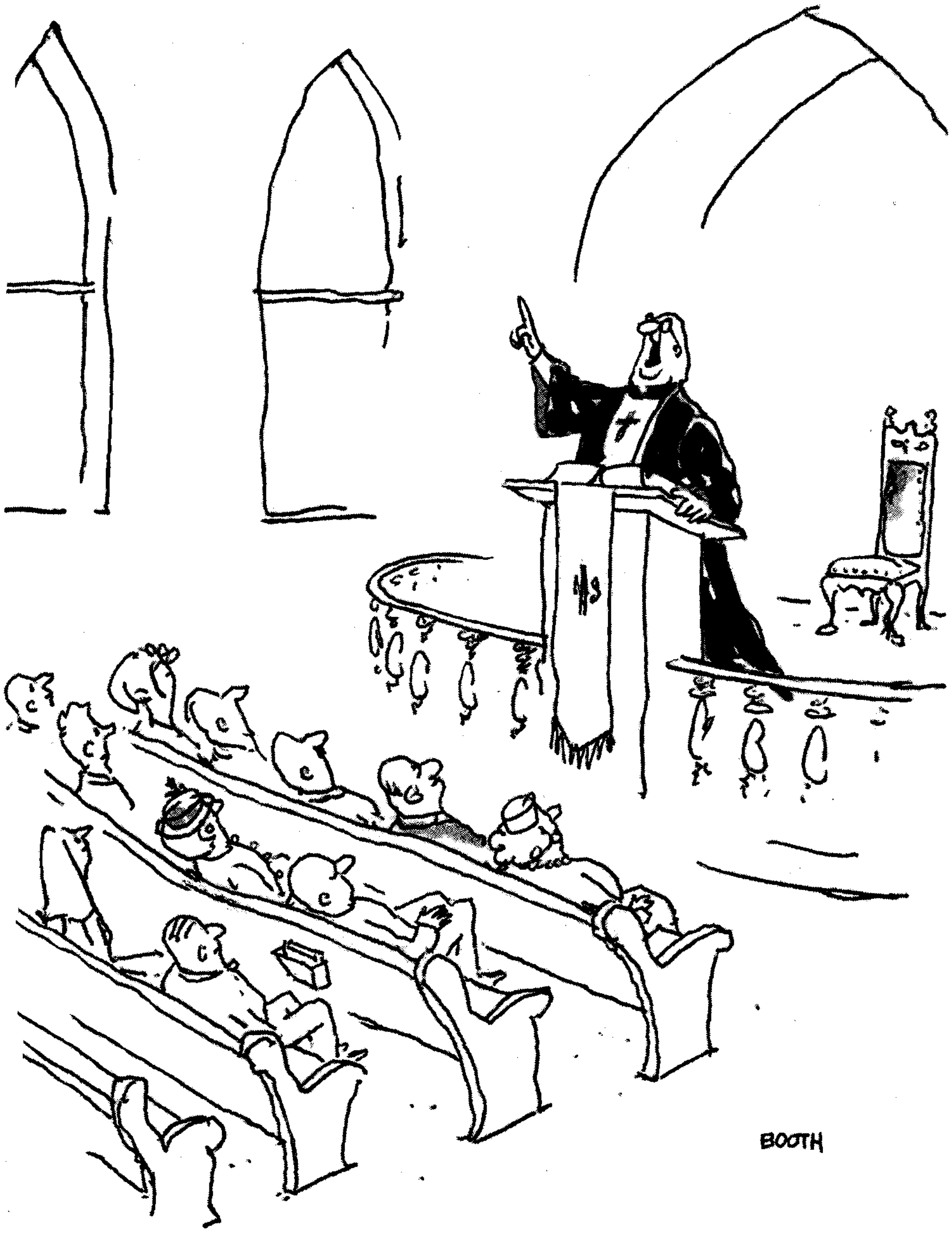
As Mr. Wilson's opportunities have increased, his hopes and his aims seem to have been lowered. When he was creating his own pieces, at the slow rhythm of roughly one major production each year, his achievements were extraordinary: I don't know that anything I've seen in any theatre has marked me more than "A Letter for Queen Victoria," in 1974. In his works of that time, he made a new theatrical world. Subsequently, he's occasionally been able to bring into that world pieces with their own histories and their own identities—perhaps most successfully "Parsifal," which Houston Grand Opera presented magnificently in February of 1992. But that achievement was possible largely because Wagner's last opera is a work already Wilsonian in its time scale, in its theme of the idiot boy at sea in lofty ceremonies, and in its assault on transcendence by means of calculated formal maneuver. The qualities of "Madame Butterfly" are a little different.

Not that they looked so in Mr. Wilson's Paris interpretation. The vast stage was virtually bare. The few things that remained—a pebbled pathway, a solitary rock, sometimes a chair, the necessary people—appeared to function principally as objects to be lit. Everybody moved slowly, but less for any dramatic purpose, it seemed, than for the requirements, again, of the lighting. Light was the hero here: light in the cyclorama's magical day skies of azure, rose, and ash-yellow fusing into one another, or in its equally wonderful nightscape of a brilliant narrow suffusion of ultramarine at the bottom of the screen, lingering below darkness—and then light, too, in the phosphorescent blue on the rock, or the white on a hand, or the golden gleam on the bare upper part of a body.

All this may not have been very "Madame Butterfly," but it was very, very Robert Wilson: the work was simply placed, with clinical detachment, in an alien environment—as if in a box, as if in a coffin. What we saw was therefore consistent to some degree with Mr. Wilson's stated aesthetic, since, with reference to his productions of traditional operas, he has repeatedly stressed how the visual contribution can become independent of the music and of the text. If that independence were to be the criterion, one would have to judge his "Madame Butterfly" a greater triumph than his remarkable "Parsifal," because there was now so little connection between the director's work and the composer's, beyond the fact that both were taking place on the same stage at the same time. This was a production



Robert Wilson: Trying to maintain his distinct vision at the very un-Wilsonian pace of an international stage director.



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alongside "Madame Butterfly," or perhaps over "Madame Butterfly," but certainly not of it.

Most often, the personages onstage, who appeared to be singing the characters' music without for a moment enacting them as people, behaved with a sublime disregard for what was going on, either on the stage or in the score, and for what they themselves were having to deliver. Signal points in the drama were registered not by these statuesque people but—and this is acutely typical of Mr. Wilson's work—by the lighting: by a sudden blackout, for instance, when the Bonze denounces Butterfly's spiritual defection. Music that's customarily seen as demanding movement—such as the rush in the orchestra when the child is supposed to reënter near the end—swept across an entirely still stage. (But this was effective, presenting the music as a mirror not of action but of the central character's thought.) Not only did the production fail to deliver the expected visual appurtenances; it made a point of its failure—almost a comic point, as when Pinkerton and Sharpless in the first act ostentatiously mimed holding glasses in their hands.

However, these displays of independence were a mite superficial, for, even while they were going on, Mr. Wilson was all the time telling us how very Japanese he takes Puccini's Japonaiserie to be: the whole manner of his production came out of the simple fact of the opera's geographical setting. (The doctrine of independence would surely rather that "Billy Budd," say, be presented in the manner of Kabuki, or "La Bohème" as the kind of sardonic, satanic cabaret we saw in "The Black Rider.") There was a wooden walkway imitating the *hanamichi* of Japanese theatre, and the severe costumes (by Frida Parmeggiani, one of Mr. Wilson's regular collaborators) looked in the same direction. The formal movement, the deceleration, and the denuding of the stage also suggested—in the context of an opera normally so colorful and bustling—Japanese drama. But suggestion was all that could be achieved, for there were two huge problems with this projected Japanizing of Puccini. One was that we were looking at opera singers—at people who were in Tchaikovsky yesterday and would be in Handel tomorrow—not at actors trained for decades in a single, ruthlessly demanding tradition of deportment and gesture. The other was that "Madame Butterfly" is not, after all, a Noh play.

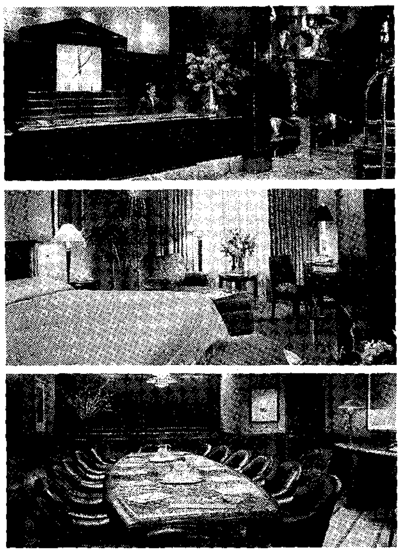
Mr. Wilson's attempt to make it one smacked disturbingly of the scorn and the opportunism that the opera tries to denounce in Pinkerton. Foreign manners were being tried on without any care for the density of meaning they convey or the obligations they impose. For all the prevailing atmosphere of deep earnestness, the effect of the production was disturbingly hollow: one could read the director's signature, without any doubt, but it was placed on an empty and ignorant canvas.

There was one area of exception to that blankness. Some of Mr. Wilson's earlier work made startling use of nonprofessional performers, and here the child (a grave Steeve Lopez) became a major participant. In the long nocturne interlude, he alone moved about the stage, in childish games of eating and dreaming, while Butterfly and Suzuki waited, and it was his hand, warding Pinkerton off, that provided the final gesture. However, the very poignancy of that sign proved how far the production had come from Mr. Wilson's declared aim of following an independent, parallel path. Perhaps, too, one welcomed the boy for his unself-consciousness in a production so tight with the striving for elegance.

Meanwhile, there was an opera going on. The orchestra, under the Opéra Bastille's music director, Myung-Whun Chung, occasionally reminded us of Puccini's admiration for Debussy—though the orchestral sound is thin in this theatre and the balance odd. (It was a great night for the timpanist.) Valentina Sedipova was the Butterfly I heard, coming to firmness and lustre in the second act; she shared the title role with Diana Soviero. Of the rest of the cast, only Georges Gautier as Goro stood out—not least for the exact, crablike movements that made him, curiously, a cousin to Klingsor in Mr. Wilson's gallery of these robot beings who stand and twitch and sing.

"THE BLACK RIDER" was a different kind of disappointment. In recent years, Mr. Wilson's hectic activity has been divided largely between staging operas in Paris and working with theatre companies in Germany: the Schaubühne of Berlin and the Thalia Theater of Hamburg. It was for the Thalia company that he put together "The Black Rider," nearly four years ago, and, more recently, "Alice," also with music and lyrics by Tom Waits. As has become the way of things, Mr. Wilson's productions come to this country only after they've been seen in Europe—and seen widely in the case of "The Black Rider," which the Thalia took to Vienna and Paris, and which the company recorded for Austrian television. So belatedness may have been partly responsible for the weak effect of the piece at BAM. Vampires? That was 1992.

But I don't think that's the whole dismal story. The thing just didn't seem a very interesting piece. I'm not sure why anyone should have decided, other than for very morbid reasons, that William Burroughs would be the person to rewrite the tale of a young man tricked by



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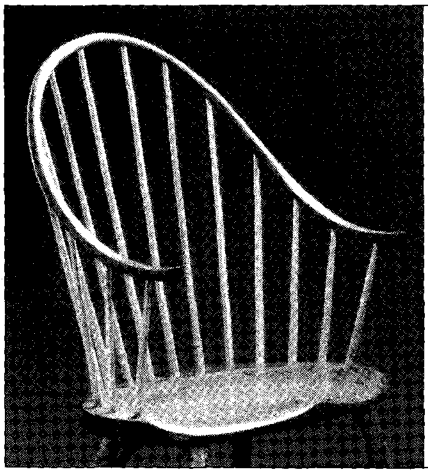

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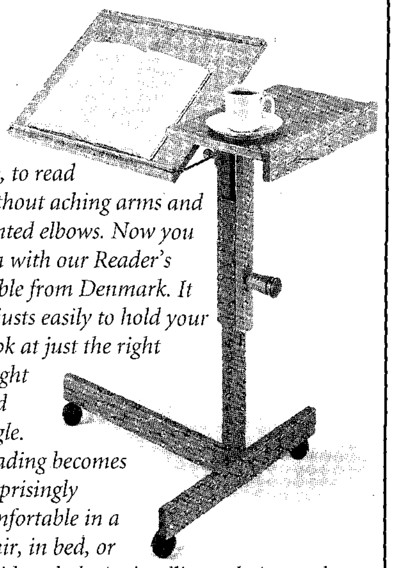

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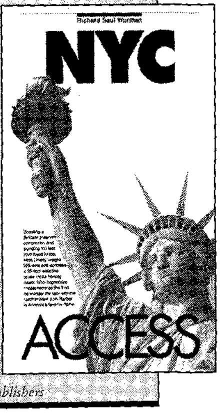

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the Devil's gift of magic bullets into shooting his bride on their wedding day—the tale behind Weber's "Der Freischütz." The lyrics had some wit, wonder, and oddity when they tried—as in Mr. Burroughs' "That's the way the potato mashes / That's the way the pan flashes / That's the way the market crashes," and so on through other splendidly boneheaded rhymes, or Mr. Waits' striking lines "November has tied me / To an old dead tree / Get word to April / To rescue me"—but mostly they didn't try. As for Mr. Waits' music, it's all in the graze and grizzle of his voice. Listening to his recording of the songs (Island 314-518 559-2), you'd think you were hearing the next Kurt Weill; as delivered by the Thalia actors, the score sounded like a stitchwork of nursery rhymes. It needed, too, a band that could do what Mr. Waits found that the Californian players on his recording could do: " 'Frankenstein' the music into something like a beautiful train wreck." (The railway imagery goes on, in the recording, in the lumbering weight of the rhythms and the metal-on-metal grate of the sound—qualities that were replaced in the Brooklyn performance by looseness and insipidity.)

The best musical moments at BAM—also the funniest—were those intoned by the recorded voice of Mr. Burroughs. That was the way the pan flashed. And it flashed only fitfully, too, in the stage presentation. One scene recalled the focussed bizarreness of Mr. Wilson's earlier days: the feeling of people onstage being thoroughly absorbed in what they're doing, and completely unfussed to be doing it in public, for an audience that can't but find it inscrutable—absorbed and unfussed as the little boy was in "Madame Butterfly." (This is why "Parsifal" glides so smoothly into Mr. Wilson's theatre: his best work puts us in Parsifal's position in the first Grail scene—watching, even watching intently, while all the time understanding nothing that we can verbalize.) In this key scene of precision mystery, the heroine awoke in a room filled with the bloody carcasses of indistinguishable quadrupeds, with, to the rear, two people dressed as incarnations of Horus, and, in front, a lady in an evening gown slowly crossing the stage while making animal noises.

Whoever was responsible for the amplification of those noises—and for the projection and transformation of other vocal sounds throughout the piece—is some kind of genius: Mr. Wilson has the knack of attracting them. Ms. Parmeggiani was again the costume designer, turning her fancy this time toward "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" rather than toward Noh theatre, but with equally effective results. The problems weren't in the technicalities and the accoutrements, and they weren't essentially in the performances: the actors may have been deficient as clowns and singers, but they offered fiercely clean projection, startling grimaces, and a magnificent collection of muscular dysfunctions. No, what crippled the piece was what had, though so differently, crippled the "Madame Butterfly" production: a central lack of seriousness, a vaunting of style.

In "The Black Rider," there was no subject that the production was betraying or ignoring, but, maybe for that reason, Mr. Wilson's betrayal of his own achievements and potentialities was the more melancholy to observe. Items from his previous productions—moving beams and boxes of light, colored spots used to illuminate specific actors or objects, scenes mimed in slow motion (as the whole climactic scene of the marriage-murder was), framework furniture—were dealt onto the stage like cards from a pack of tricks and deceits, their magic mocked by the slickness with which they could be pulled out again. The scene I described above, of meat, gods, and a moving lady, wasn't much more than a rehash, seemingly calculated to make Mr. Wilson's admirers, me among them, fill up its vacancy with hope and memory.

For the moment, memory is all we have. Only the odd blurry photograph and library videotape appear to survive to represent Mr. Wilson's great works of the early seventies. The videotape of the prologue to the fourth act of "Deafman Glance"—recently on view at the Paula Cooper Gallery, on Wooster Street—was made in 1981, more than a decade after the original piece, and it's a glacial entombment. But hope can persist. In a recent interview in a French magazine, Mr. Wilson gave a hint of being jaded with international success, and of wanting to devote more time to his projects with students in Water Mill, on Long Island. We'll see. ♦

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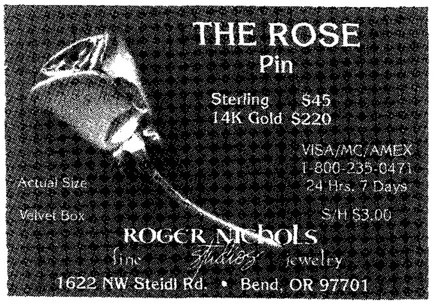

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TRUE WEST

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

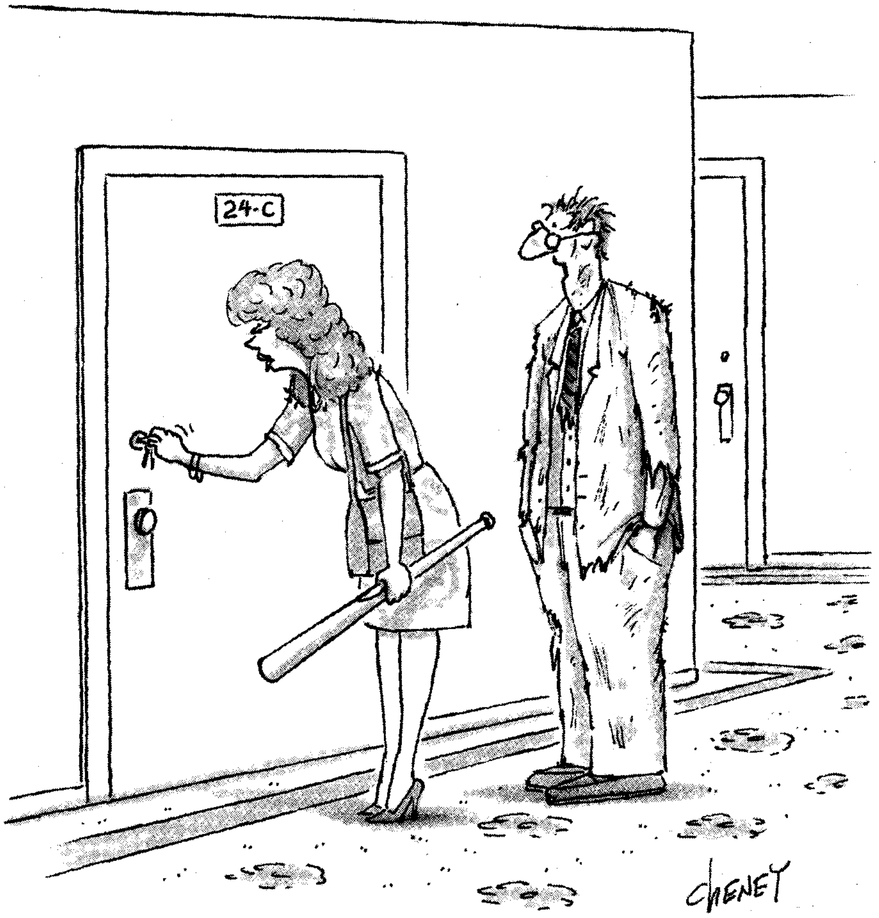
THE Chiricahua Apache warrior Geronimo was the last Indian leader in the Southwest to surrender to the United States Army, and his stubborn refusal to submit to the overwhelming force of the authorities is what makes him one of the most compelling figures in the history and the mythology of the West. Although Western movies have often portrayed him as a villain—a terrifying and unscrupulous marauder—there has always been something romantic about him, too; you can't help feeling at least a grudging admiration for someone who fights so tenaciously against the destruction of his way of life. Geronimo's appeal is deeply paradoxical: he was a kind of guerrilla conservative, who conducted a violent and utterly quixotic rear-guard campaign against the historical inevitability of westward expansion. He and his small band of followers darted through the mountains and canyons of the Southwest like coyotes on the run, but what they were actually doing was digging in their heels, bracing themselves against the speeding, unstoppable train of progress.

Last stand: Wes Studi in "Geronimo: An American Legend."

JARRETT HUDDLESTON

Photographs of Geronimo in his prime show a man with a fierce, implacable demeanor and the stocky physique of a defensive lineman; he looks as if he were daring the rest of the world to move him out of its way. Wes Studi, who plays the famous warrior in Walter Hill's absorbing and unusually thoughtful new movie, "Geronimo: An American Legend," has a lean, wiry frame, but he nonetheless manages to convey, superbly, the essential quality of those photographs, which is the gravity of Geronimo's idea of himself. This sense of a strong, unquestioned, rocklike identity—which often comes across in the portrait photography of the nineteenth century—feels completely alien to our contemporary consciousness; Hill is lucky to have found an actor who could capture it. Studi's Geronimo has the bearing of a man who knows exactly who he is, and the movie, surprisingly, uses that quality not to confer on the character an aura of ancient wisdom but to unnerve us. The unshakable integrity of Geronimo's personality gives him at times a frighteningly opaque look—the glazed intensity of a full-blown paranoiac.

Hill and the screenwriters, John Milius and Larry Gross, recognize that Geronimo's paranoia was in many ways justified: the government really was out to destroy the Apaches' way of life, and the movie is unambiguously sympathetic to their suffering. Where "Geronimo" differs from, say, "Dances with Wolves" is that this picture doesn't oversell the case by presenting the Indians as an idyllic community of spiritually superior innocents and the Army as an aggregation of bloodthirsty racists. "Geronimo" does not assume that the audience will be paralyzed with moral confusion if the Indians aren't all saints and the cavalrymen aren't all beasts. There's a genuine, unforced dignity about this picture's approach to history: the facts of the government's Indian policy are allowed to speak for themselves, without rhetorical bombast, and they're more than eloquent enough to make



"So, you doing anything tomorrow night?"

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us feel a profound sense of injustice.

"Geronimo," like its title character, moves with a stately self-assurance, a confidence that seems eerie, unfamiliar. The movie's serenity feels strange, almost shocking, only because it has been so long since anyone has dared to make a Western in the ample, leisurely, classical style of John Ford. The contemplative narrative rhythm of "Geronimo" is of a piece with the film's awestruck, lingered-over images of lonely Western landscapes (the ravishing cinematography is by Lloyd Ahern), and with the generally sober manner in which the characters go about the business of war. The most striking characteristic of Ford's famous movies about the Indian wars—"Fort Apache" (1948), "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon" (1949), and "Rio Grande" (1950)—is the mournful weight they give to the lives of the people out there on the perilous frontier. Hill, too, wants us to recognize the seriousness of that era's events and the grandeur of the natural stage on which they were played out, and he's willing (as Ford was) to slow the movie down so we can take it all in and appreciate the magnitude of the story he's telling. He uses the genre's conventions lovingly, and you can sense that he's working from a deep conviction that the Western movie is itself an important part of American history; the film also contains echoes of several of Ford's descendants, such as Sam Peckinpah, Robert Aldrich, and Delmer Daves (whose 1950 "Broken Arrow," which treats a slightly earlier phase of the conflict between the Army and the Apaches, was one of the first explicitly pro-Indian Westerns). In "Geronimo" Walter Hill seems bent on summoning up the spirits of his ancestors from within himself; he's a defiant traditionalist.

But he isn't so respectful of his antecedents—or so scrupulous about historical accuracy—that he forgets to make an entertaining movie. "Geronimo" gets a lot of story into its hour-and-fifty-six-minute running time; the screenplay takes some liberties with the record in order to reduce a large cast of historical characters to a manageable few and to compress a complex sequence of events into a tight dramatic structure. And the picture's carefully developed narrative, detailing the intricate dance of suspicion and misunderstanding between the Army and Geronimo's renegade Chiricahuas, is studded with breathtakingly edited action sequences, in the furiously kinetic style that Hill is known for. If the filmmaking in "Geronimo" seems sedate by comparison with the director's urban-action extravaganzas—films like "The Warriors," "48 Hrs.," and "Trespass"—it's only because the action scenes here are briefer; you sense that Hill is being careful not to let a flashy set piece jump out at us and interrupt the flow of the story. (Besides, if he did one of those big numbers in the middle of the picture he would be obligated to top it with a spectacular climax, and history doesn't provide anything suitable: in the end, Geronimo just got tired of running and negotiated a surrender.) Perhaps the most memorable of the movie's swift flourishes of action is a one-on-one confrontation between the principal white character, Lieutenant Charles Gatewood (Jason Patric), and an Apache rider who abruptly splits off from a peaceful procession of his tribesmen and charges, insanely, toward Gatewood's detachment. The Indian, galloping alone into a stark, wide-open valley, shouting and brandishing his rifle, is a startling image of desperate rage mixed with lunatic pride. And Gatewood's response (which involves an elegant piece of horsemanship) is equally expressive: he does what he has to do with great skill but no enthusiasm. The scene lasts no more than two minutes, yet somehow the whole terrible and heroic story of the West seems to be in it.

It's certainly Patric's best moment in "Geronimo"; his portrayal of the humane Gatewood—one of the few soldiers Geronimo trusted, and the man he ultimately gave himself up to—is perfectly adequate, but he's overshadowed by Studi and a couple of members of the supporting cast. Gene Hackman plays General George Crook, who supervised the Army's efforts to round up the Southwest Indians into reservations and make sure they stayed there; he succeeded with all of them except Geronimo and his band. (By the time Geronimo surrendered, Crook had been replaced by General Nelson Miles.) Hackman effortlessly embodies the decency, the toughness, and the fair-mindedness that enabled Crook to do the job so well, and he has a wonderful moment during a peace conference with Geronimo, when, exasperated by the Apache's pigheadedness, he begins to sound like Lloyd Bentsen scolding Dan Quayle. "I knew *Cochise*," he sputters. And Robert Duvall, as a grumpy scout named Al Sieber, gives a loose, lived-in performance: every scene he's in has a subtle comic spark, and Hill rewards him with a lovely, reverent closeup when his character dies.

The lukewarm-to-negative critical reception of "Geronimo" is a bad omen for the future of traditional Westerns. The recent successes of "Dances with Wolves" and "Unforgiven" probably don't indicate a significant public appetite for the sort of solid, craftsmanlike storytelling that Walter Hill practices here. Both "Wolves," by virtue of its New Age spiritual tone, and "Unforgiven," by virtue of its tortured ambivalence about violence and morality, have very modern sensibilities. The calm, tragic unfolding of history in "Geronimo" may seem stodgy and unstimulating to viewers who have never had the chance to accustom themselves to the pleasures of the classical Western style: the plainspoken lyricism of life-and-death dramas that take their time to develop, until they accumulate meanings large enough to fill their spacious settings. "Geronimo" builds in this way to a great, stirring final shot of a train heading away from us across a huge plain. It's the train that is carrying Geronimo and his followers away from their homeland, toward exile in Florida; he, at least, would never return. After all we've seen in "Geronimo," we're able to feel, in this simply and beautifully composed image, the full, sorrowful truth of the Apaches' fate: the vehicle that symbolizes, romantically, the opening of the West for white settlers is taking the Indians in the opposite direction, making them disappear, slowly, into the vast distance. Hill holds the shot for a long, long time, as if he couldn't quite believe that that train and the spirit it represents were really going to vanish. ◆

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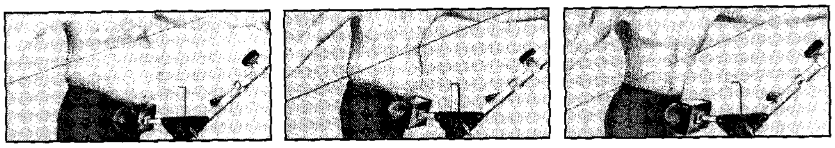

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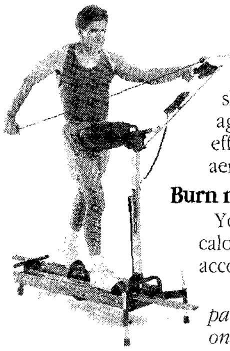

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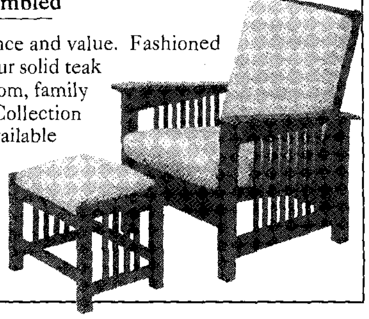

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BOOKS

PAX ATOMICA

BY DANIEL J. KEVLES

AT a banquet in the Kremlin on Christmas Eve, 1945, Joseph Stalin brusquely interrupted the hard-line remarks of his foreign minister to toast James B. Conant for his superb role in the creation of the atomic bomb, declaring, in an endorsement of Conant's purpose in Moscow, "We must work together to see that this great invention is used for peaceful ends." A chemist of distinguished accomplishment, Conant was the president of Harvard University and had been one of the highest-ranking administrators in the atomic-bomb project during the Second World War. After Hiroshima, he remained deeply engaged in the affairs of American national security, and travelled constantly between Cambridge and Washington, D.C. He wrote prolifically on salient issues of the Cold War, ranging from the arms race to education, and earned a stature in American public life that no present-day university president enjoys (or seems to aspire to). A fellow-president once remarked that some of his colleagues confused the voice of Conant with the voice of God.

Since his death, in 1978, however, Conant has all but faded from memory. Although privately capable of wry humor and keen conversation, he was extremely guarded in his public persona. To the end, he kept both his personal life and his inner thoughts to himself, publishing, in 1970, a thick autobiography, "My Several Lives," that was as lifeless as it was long. Nor was he eligible for lasting attention as a Promethean sinner, in the manner of J. Robert Oppenheimer, who was the brilliant director of the Los Alamos laboratory where the bomb was designed, and who emerged from the war an eloquent and tortured spirit, saying that now "physicists have known sin." Conant never suffered public moral compunction over the use of terrible weapons in wartime. As a member of the United States Army Chemical Warfare Service during the First World War, he had produced mustard gas and then the militarily superior lewisite—"the great American gas which would win the war," he said—and he saw no difference between killing a man with gas and killing him with a bullet. He counted the atomic bombing of Hiroshima no worse than the firebombing of Tokyo. To Conant, war had its own moral rules. He was also an unembarrassed Cold Warrior, and, as such, he fell from grace after Vietnam—along with other former luminaries of national security—and was relegated to obscurity.

However, the end of the Cold War should renew our interest in warriors like Conant, not only because of the favorable outcome of the contest but also because the United States remains part of an unstable world in which ever more nations will become scientifically capable of acquiring nuclear weapons. James G. Hershberg ably comes to grips with Conant and his hazardous times in "James B. Conant: Harvard to Hiroshima and the Making of the Nuclear Age" (Knopf; $35). Hershberg, who is the coördinator of the Cold War International History Project at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, in Washington, approaches Conant fair-mindedly but from the perspective of the post-Vietnam generation, expressing its quarrels with the policymakers of the post-Second World War era. His fundamental concern is how Conant and others grappled with the moral and intellectual issues of the nuclear-arms race and with the marshalling of science and knowledge in the service of the state. His book is vibrantly written and compelling, and it breaches Conant's shield of public discretion in masterly fashion, making extensive use of unpublished interviews, diaries, reports, and correspondence pried from private and governmental repositories. It is a huge, ambitious work—a history of the Cold War as Conant encountered it as well as a study of the man.

Conant, who was born in 1893, grew up in Dorchester, a middle-class neighborhood of Boston, in a prospering, loosely Protestant family that was at once

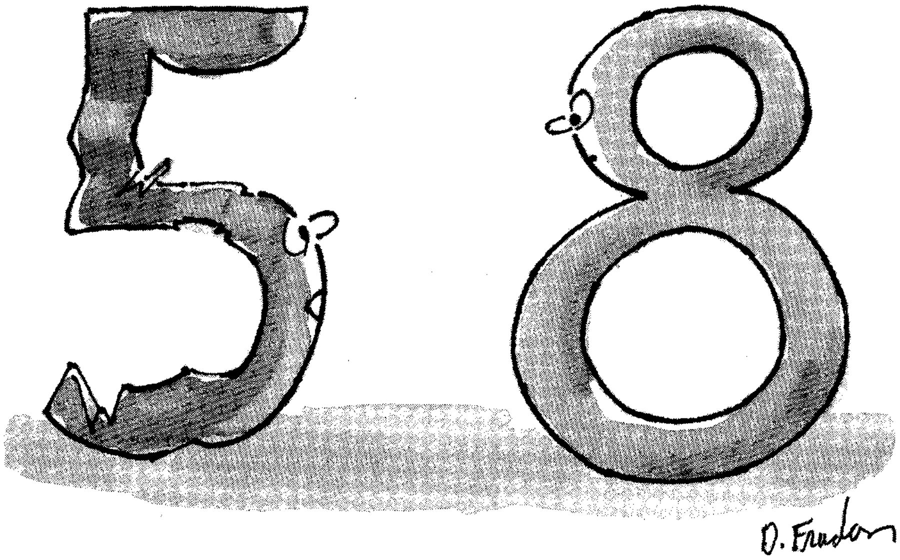
Republican, ferociously anti-imperialist, and imbued with an egalitarian reverence for the North's victory in the Civil War. He earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees at Harvard, where he worked to soften his dour New England demeanor, once jotting in his pocket diary the reminder "*Smile*, damn it, *smile!!*" In 1919, he joined the Harvard faculty, and two years later he married Grace Thayer Richards, the daughter of one of his mentors—Theodore Richards, who was the first American to win a Nobel Prize in Chemistry. Shortly after the couple became engaged, Conant confided to his fiancée that he had three ambitions: to become the leading organic chemist in the United States, the president of Harvard, and, ultimately, a member of the United States Cabinet. In the nineteen-twenties, he came close enough to realzing the first ambiion to be elected to he National Academy of Sciences and honored with prizes. The realization of he second came in 1933, despite oppoition from liberal humanists like Felix Frankfurter (who ategorized Conant's mind to a friend on he Harvard Corporation as "essentially nperceptive") and rom some of Harvard's conservative upper-crust constituncy, who, according to Hershberg, ould not understand why the corporaon had reached all the way to Dorchester to find a president.

As president, Conant sought to reuce the Boston Brahmin hold on Harvard, ruthlessly imposing high stanards for the appointment of faculty to ermanent posts and pressing to extend he opportunities of the university to talnted young men (though not young omen) in all the Dorchesters of the ountry. The changes in the social comosition of Harvard came slowly, but afr the Second World War a Boston clubman was overheard to gripe, "By God, the place has gone to hell under Conant. Did you see who the class marshals were? A Jew, a Negro, and a Roman Catholic."

THE outbreak of the Second World War and the Nazi blitzkrieg that followed turned Conant into a pro-Allies interventionist. In June of 1940, he went to Washington to help initiate the mobilization of science for national defense, and later that month a diary entry records his telling the president of Princeton what he believed the next postwar era should look like: "U.S.A. armed to the teeth, belligerent and running the world. A Pax Americana like the Pax Britannica of the 19th Century." During the war, once nuclear weapons appeared to be a practical possibility, Conant began thinking about the implications for the arrangement of the postwar international order. He soon advanced a two-pronged approach to the issue: mount an attempt to obtain the agreement of the Soviet Union to a system of international control of nuclear energy which would eliminate nuclear weapons from the world arena, but, until such control was achieved, maintain American dominance of the bomb, so as to insure the Pax Americana through a pax atomica. These ideas shaped his recommendation to Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson concerning the atomic bombing of Japan: that it be carried out without prior warning against a vital war target closely surrounded by civilian houses. Conant's purpose was not only to shock the Japanese into surrendering but also to frighten both the Soviets and his fellow-Americans into recognizing the need for international control.

James B. Conant, an architect of America's atomic-bomb project and the subject of a new biography, photographed with Vannevar Bush, as he testified before Congress in 1945.

After the war, Conant's public explanations of his position drew blasts like the one he received from the Reverend Mr. Bradford Young, of Grace Church, Manchester, New Hampshire, who in a letter to Conant in 1945 expressed distress at seeing him "preparing and participating in such a Godlike decision with *apparently* no sense of presumption, no fear and trembling, no feeling of tragic involvement in a horrible deed." Conant responded to Young—as he did to others—that moral men had to commit immoral acts in a world at war, and he cited the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr's influential book "The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness," published in 1944, which justified resorting to arms in defense of humane civilization. Hershberg suggests, however, that although Conant continued to defend the bombing on the record, arrows like Young's may have disturbed his interior moral balance, which was already unsettled. He had been shaken when, in July of 1945, some weeks after advancing his recommendation for the bombing of Japan, he witnessed the first atomic test explosion, at Alamogordo, New Mexico: he likened what he saw—"the whole sky suddenly full of white light"—to the end of the world. Now he reckoned that the Russians would eventually obtain a bomb of



"I was an eight, too, until the number crunchers got hold of me."

• •

their own, which would bring the end of the world closer by ushering in what he termed "the age of the Superblitz."

In the early postwar years, faced with the spectre that he had helped raise, Conant promoted his views on international control insistently within the tightly secret circles of atomic policymaking and at the same time contributed his advisory expertise to the steady strengthening of the American nuclear arsenal. He rued the creation of atomic weapons, even if he defended their wartime use, and hoped to get rid of them entirely. To that end—in contrast to most other atomic-affairs insiders, including some of his pro-control allies—Conant resolutely proposed that the United States forswear even the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, correctly holding that predictions of a proximate age of atomic plenty were nothing but "bedtime stories" and, more important, presciently fearing that if nuclear reactors were built in other countries they could too easily be redirected from the production of electrical power to the production of materials for weapons. He was willing to forgo American secrecy on atomic matters in exchange for the right of inspection in Soviet territory. (The idea of ground inspection was initially scoffed at, but it became part of various American arms-control initiatives later on, beginning with the nuclear-test-ban negotiations at the end of the Eisenhower years.) Conant reasoned that, measured against the undoubted Russian progress on nuclear weapons, the value of America's atomic know-how would be decreasing every year anyway, "like a cake of ice on a hot day."

Hershberg explains that it was the outbreak of the Korean War, in 1950, that converted Conant into a full-blooded Cold Warrior. Conant had thought that the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union was fundamentally ideological and political; now, assuming, as most policymakers mistakenly did, that the Soviets had prompted the North Korean attack, he saw it as a military struggle. He relinquished his hope for international nuclear control in favor of reliance on nuclear deterrence, grimly reconciling himself to living, as he put it in a speech in 1951, "under the shadow of the 20th century volcano—atomic bombs." The previous year, he had co-founded and become head of the Committee on the Present Danger, a blue-chip group of prominent, mainly Republican internationalists which, as Hershberg describes it, combined "outsider standing with insider connections" and acted as "an unofficial propaganda arm" of the government. Conant himself campaigned for substantial increases in military spending, a military draft, and a commitment of American troops in Western Europe. In 1953, putting his career where his convictions were, he left Harvard to become the United States High Commissioner in Germany. His principal task at first was to reconcile the Eisenhower Administration's hesitation to commit sizable ground forces to Europe and Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's fear that the hesitation implied a willingness to depend instead on nuclear deterrence, which would make Germany an atomic killing ground in the event of hostilities. Conant opposed the resolution eventually arrived at—the rearmament of West Germany, which reduced the American military burden. Nevertheless, after becoming, in 1955, the first American Ambassador to the newly formed Federal Republic, he dutifully continued to press his government's interest, though not with sufficient political finesse to satisfy either Adenauer or Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. In 1957, his diplomatic effectiveness undermined on both sides of the Atlantic, he left the Ambassadorship and returned to the United States. He never came closer to realizing his early ambition to join a President's Cabinet. Conant devoted much of his remaining active years to writing studies of American secondary education, warning in one of them, published in 1961, that "social dynamite" was accumulating in the nation's major cities.

THE physicist I. I. Rabi, who wa
also a member of the atomic-
advisory élite, once remarked of Conan
that "red tape ran in his veins," and on
of Conant's grandsons has said tha
he had an "incapacity for intimacy.
Hershberg, attentive to Conant's privat
life, reveals that his two sons resente
that incapacity, one to the point of alienation, and that Conant's wife frequentl
felt isolated and inadequate in the marriage. Hershberg does not attempt to integrate the private and public Conants
It is hard to see how one could, beyon
reinforcing the impression that he led
highly intellectualized life, in which idea
were paramount.

Among the ideas that mattered mos
to Conant were those drawn from his
tory—both the history he read and, mor
important, the history he had live
through, particularly the First Worl
War and its aftermath. Like man
Americans, he learned from the interwa
years that isolationism was a dangerou
mistake, but, unlike most, he recognize
that historical memory has political con
sequences. Hershberg points out th
Conant was one of the first to grasp th
"totemic significance for his own and f

ture generations" of the fate of Hiroshima. If the atomic bombing of Japan was seen as justified, then using the threat of nuclear weapons to bring the Soviets to the bargaining table would be, too. If it was not, then Americans might revolt against nuclear weaponeers, just as they had turned against munitions-makers after the First World War. In 1947, Conant said in a lecture to the National War College, "You have to get the past straight before you do much to prepare people for the future."

In a particularly arresting chapter, Hershberg recounts how Conant sought to insure that the American people got the history of Hiroshima straight. He was prompted to do so by the mounting public outcry over the atomic bombing of Japan, particularly Norman Cousins' explicit condemnation of it in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, in the issue of September 14, 1946. Conant worried that, even though such criticisms were current among only a minority of the population, it was an influential minority, of the type that went into teaching and would diffuse its indictment through the next generation. "We are in danger of repeating the fallacy . . . that the United States had made a great error in entering World War I," he wrote to Harvey H. Bundy, whose son McGeorge Bundy was then helping Henry Stimson, now retired, write his memoirs. At Conant's urging, Stimson published an article in *Harper's*, n 1947, that matter-of-factly defended the bombings as necessary to end the war quickly and prevent major loss of American life in an invasion of the Japanese homeland. The article, which had been ubstantially revised by Conant, was as emarkable for what it neglected to discuss—whether such an invasion would have been necessary, for instance, or the xpected role of the bomb's shock effect n postwar diplomacy—as it was decisive n winning the immediate interpretative battle. As Hershberg observes, Stimson's ccount stood "for almost two decades as he authoritative historical record of the events of 1945."

YET history was an incomplete guide for anyone, including Conant, who was trying to deal with nuclear weapons. Moreover, traditional principles of open debate were not readily applicable to making policy for a highly classified technology in a nation that felt itself threatened by the Soviet Union not only from without but from within. In the postwar decade, clamor was heard from the far right for preventive war against the pre-nuclear Soviet Union, and even middle-of-the-roaders called for open-ended technological superiority after the Soviets got the bomb, in 1949. A secret National Security Council directive held that public debate on the moral issue of when to use nuclear weapons could not be risked; factions called for the virtual militarization of American society, including its universities; and McCarthyites campaigned to suppress dissent—especially dissent from a hard-line anti-Soviet policy. The conditions of national security in Conant's day were new, and were fraught with fear and uncertainty; and, in the aftermath of the Depression, the drive for a prosperous and more egalitarian society appeared vulnerable to setbacks and internal strife. Conant was acutely aware of how far the United States had come in taking on global responsibilities and breaking down the barriers of class, and he was courageously resolved—in the face of frequently bitter opposition in both Cambridge and Washington—to advance this progress, but he also wanted to preserve the civilization that made it possible.

In January, 1949, Conant published a widely applauded attack on preventive war, writing, "Freedom has more than once been won by war, but once won it can only be protected by adherence to those moral principles which were repudiated in its achievement." He wanted substantial American ground forces stationed in Western Europe, because he believed that their deployment would help avoid an atomic confrontation while maintaining the security of the region. He tried to halt the technological juggernaut by spearheading the atomic-advisory opposition to the construction of a hydrogen bomb—in fact, Hershberg argues convincingly, Conant marched ahead of Oppenheimer in the matter. Conant's objections were principally moral, grounded in the conviction that such powerful bombs would be weapons of genocide, overwhelming any conceivably legitimate purpose of state.

In 1954, when Oppenheimer was accused of being a security risk, not least because he had been an insufficient enthusiast of the H-bomb, Conant insisted on coming to his defense, even though

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Dulles told him, as Conant recorded it in his diary, that "I should know this might destroy my usefulness to govt." (Conant added, "I said I quite realized this and he only had to give the word and I was through!") At Oppenheimer's security hearing, Conant maintained that if opposition to the H-bomb made someone a risk to the country, then he, too, was unqualified to serve in government, because he had opposed the weapon as strongly as anyone.

In peacetime, Conant consistently resisted secrecy in atomic policymaking. He also refused to allow classified research on the Harvard campus, opposed loyalty oaths for teachers, and defended politically controversial Harvard faculty members against demands for their dismissal. He called passionately, if fruitlessly, for universal military service, with no deferments for anyone, including college students, on the ground that national policy should express a dedication to "equality of sacrifice as well as equality of opportunity." Conant believed that his country's national security was inextricably linked to its domestic health, including the realization of its democratic principles. Unlike most conservative hard-liners, he held repeatedly that the United States had to intensify the battle against social inequities at home, employing especially the weapon of education, if it was to convince the Soviet Union that it meant to win the Cold War, and convince people in the undeveloped world that an American victory was desirable.

Hershberg nevertheless asserts that Conant often undermined his principles with expediency. He faults him for not responding more vigorously to the national embarrassments of racism and poverty, for being "mildly liberal and comfortably mainstream," for holding to commitments that could "inspire but not arouse." Here he plucks Conant out of his context, holding him to standards of a later day and a different political consciousness. But Conant did tolerate a variety of national-security incursions into and restrictions on Harvard life. He also declared, with other university presidents, that Communists should not be employed as teachers, and endorsed the idea that professors who refused to name names or pleaded the Fifth Amendment before congressional committees should be automatically fired. Conant privately reasoned that such compromises of principle would preserve the university from more serious onslaughts, but his logic does not convince Hershberg, nor should it.

"You're right. It does send a powerful message."

UNDENIABLY, Conant helped to unleash the nuclear genie, and to ignite a faith in extravagant technological fixes to the hazards of national security—fixes most recently exemplified by Ronald Reagan's wishful but utopian dream of shielding the United States against thermonuclear assault. In the nuclear age, weapons systems by themselves are a source of international tension. By urging that the United States brandish a nuclear sword to frighten the Soviets to the bargaining table, Conant committed himself to a policy of contradiction: his vision of a pax atomica probably ran a greater risk of antagonizing the Soviets than it did of persuading them to abolish nuclear weapons. The Russian archives now being opened may eventually reveal whether his two-pronged scheme ever had a chance of success, but they will almost certainly show that it was handicapped by the presence of Soviet policymakers no less seduced than their American counterparts by the illusion of a fundamentally technological vision of national security. Nevertheless, Conant fought resolutely to straddle the contradictions, and to tame the nuclear threat he had helped to nourish. As Hershberg rightly acknowledges, Conant was in essence "a brave, calm, cool, rational far-sighted voice in an age of anxiety and hysteria." He not only resisted doomsday bomb-builders like Edward Teller; he steadily contested the notion that victory over the Soviet Union could be won primarily through technological superiority, recognizing that the quest for such superiority was bound to be costly, inconclusive, and endless. Conant justified every one of his actions and moral compromises on the ground that it would promote a tense stalemate with the Soviet Union—a long, uneasy period of "no war" (he hesitated to call it peace) that would give the democratic system a chance to triumph, as he believed it would. Hershberg himself concludes, discerningly, that Conant "would have regarded the anti-Communist revolutions that ended Germany's division, the Cold War in Europe, and the Soviet Union itsel as the most fitting tribute to—and vindication of—his life and career." ♦

BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Why Should You Doubt Me Now?

by Mary Breasted

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $23)

"If there is a fate that can befall a man worse than having the Virgin Mary appear in his bedroom just as he is about to seduce the most beautiful apprentice horoscope writer in Dublin, Rupert Penrose did not know of one." Anyone who can resist this opening sentence is probably not someone who reads for pleasure, of which there is an abundance in what follows. Rupert's bedsit rapidly becomes an international shrine, although the apparition soon deserts his digs for the garage of a developer, who consequently mislays half a ton of explosives belonging to the I.R.A. Meanwhile, the American Vice-President—female, married to a celebrity divorce lawyer, and loudly pro-choice—is paying a state visit. One of her Secret Service agents, however, becomes somewhat indifferent to conventional safety considerations, under the influence of Irish fatalism and a gorgeous member of the Irish Unemployed Feminists. This is one of those swift, twistily plotted, knowing comedies far more characteristic of British writing than of ours. But the author, an American, can't help but grant her characters—especially the women—sweetness of heart and happy endings.

A Tidewater Morning

by William Styron

(Random House; $17)

ALL Styron's best work has had the lovng, unabashed voice of spoken memoir, and these three stories are no exception. The author grew up in the Virginia Tidewater of the nineteen-thirties, and his obsessions with region, history, war, and race are rooted in that landscape of ransition. In the autobiographical title tory, a thirteen-year-old boy is immersed in books, racial confusion, and he choking unhappiness of his household as his mother is dying of cancer. In Love Day," a war story of narrow shoulers and humbling emotion, a soldier recognizes that he would rather escape he battlefield than risk a glorious death. And in "Shadrach" a white youngster is n awe of a ninety-nine-year-old sharecropper who has returned from Alabama o die on the property of the family that once owned him as a slave. These are, above all, tales of homecoming to a peculiar, troubled place.

GENERAL

Unfinished Conquest: The Guatemalan Tragedy

by Victor Perera, with photographs by Daniel Chauche

(California; $27)

THIS is a heartbreaking and informative report on some six years of travel and investigation, during which the author, who lives in the United States, tried to find out what had happened to his native country. Perera visited highlands and lowlands, farms and jungles, villages and cities, talking to soldiers and civilians, Guatemalans and foreigners. He traces Guatemala's present troubles back to 1959, when small bands of guerrillas appeared in rural areas and promised to end centuries of oppression and exploitation if the Mayan peasants would join their rebellion. The Guatemalan Army responded with a ferocity that approached genocide, and won the support of the United States on the pretext of fighting Communism. Perera finds that military terrorism has outlasted the Communist threat; murder and massacre have become the reflexive response to any disagreement, public or private. Over more than three decades, Catholics, Protestants, and Mayan traditionalists have been competing for the souls of the Maya without any perceptible effect on the atrocities.

Disraeli

by Stanley Weintraub

(Dutton; $30)

BENJAMIN DISRAELI'S new biographer tries to suggest the grand scale of British literature and politics in the mid-nineteenth century, but his book reads like a closet drama in which characters come and go, trailing their epithets behind them. What strikes the reader is the impudent intimacy of Weintraub's manner of writing: Disraeli is made merely personal. In great biographies, there is a sense of proportion, a balance between foreground and background, but here the reader is carried around like a pocket watch on Disraeli's fob. Though Weintraub's research is scrupulous, he displays a reluctance—increasingly common among biographers—to instruct the reader, to dilate when dilation would be useful. Disraeli's is a life well worth the writing, and the reading, but it is also worth a certain generosity of conception. Weintraub has everything to learn from Trollope.

Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements

by David Nasaw

(Basic; $25)

A HUNDRED years ago, the author of this effervescent social history says, the American people sought relaxation and entertainment in public. They crowded into vaudeville theatres, phonograph parlors, city ballparks, dance halls, the midways of world's fairs; after the turn of the century, it was nickelodeons and increasingly sumptuous movie palaces. In those crowds, workmen rubbed elbows with society ladies, and the immigrant was introduced to democracy. Nasaw contrasts that lively scene with today, when the urbanite with a well-grounded fear of the after-dark streets must find his entertainment in front of a television set or in a shopping mall. "No society can prosper without centers of civility and public sociability," Nasaw says, in calling for a concerted effort to establish "a new generation of spectacular and accessible public amusements." Throughout this book there runs the darker theme of racism. Black Americans, when not outright barred from dance halls and beach resorts, were segregated in "nigger heavens," or put onstage to caricature themselves as coons and cakewalkers. This shameful situation, happily, has ceased to exist, and Nasaw's call for a rebirth of public entertainment includes all the American people. Illustrations. ♦

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

SOCCER APOCALYPSE

BY JONATHAN WILSON

THIS summer, the quadrennial soccer extravaganza the World Cup is coming to America. The Final Draw took place on December 19th, and the promotional hoopla has already begun, but soccer fanatics marooned in the United States might be forgiven for anticipating the event with trepidation. The locals have already tried to reshape the game to comport with American tastes, ambitions, and desires: in recent years, they have asked FIFA, soccer's international governing body, for bigger goals, *indoor* games, and quarters instead of halves (more time for advertising?).

World Cups traditionally alternate through the soccer epicenters of Europe and Latin America. Whether they're in Italy or in Mexico, viewed live or on TV, a charged aura surrounds the events. The World Cup is dirty, stomach-churning, confusing, passionate, and profane. Here, one senses, the event is going to be sanitized, coated for easy digestion, over-efficiently policed and patrolled, made safe for corporate sponsors.

Not long ago, I went to an Irish pub, Rosie O'Grady's Blind Pig, in Brighton, Massachusetts, to watch my old hometown team play in the English FA Cup final. The place was packed, and the crowd was semi-drunk and boisterous, despite being mainly nonpartisan. There was a little tension during the National Anthem. "Now, why aren't you boys singing?" the Irish taunted the English. "Would you be a tiny bit afraid, now?"

"Take that fucking shirt off before I *burn* it," said a lout squeezed in behind me who felt offended by the sartorial support his neighbor was offering one of the teams.

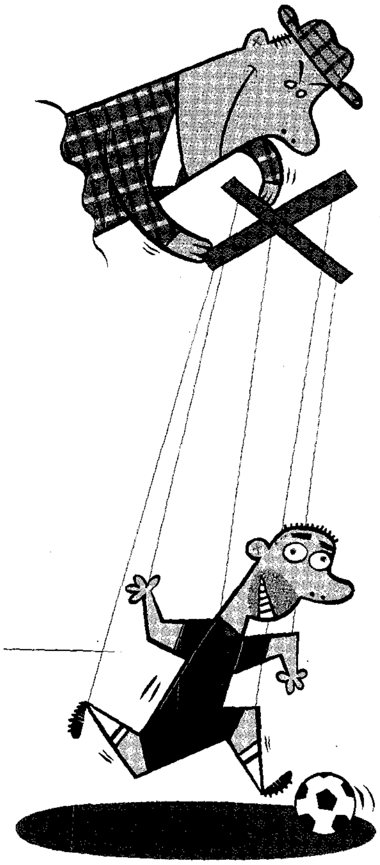
"Where are you from?" the neighbor asked.

"Wolfdemstow."

"*Walthamstow*," my neighbor replied, shoving me aside with an elbow. "You stupid moron. You can't even pronounce it."

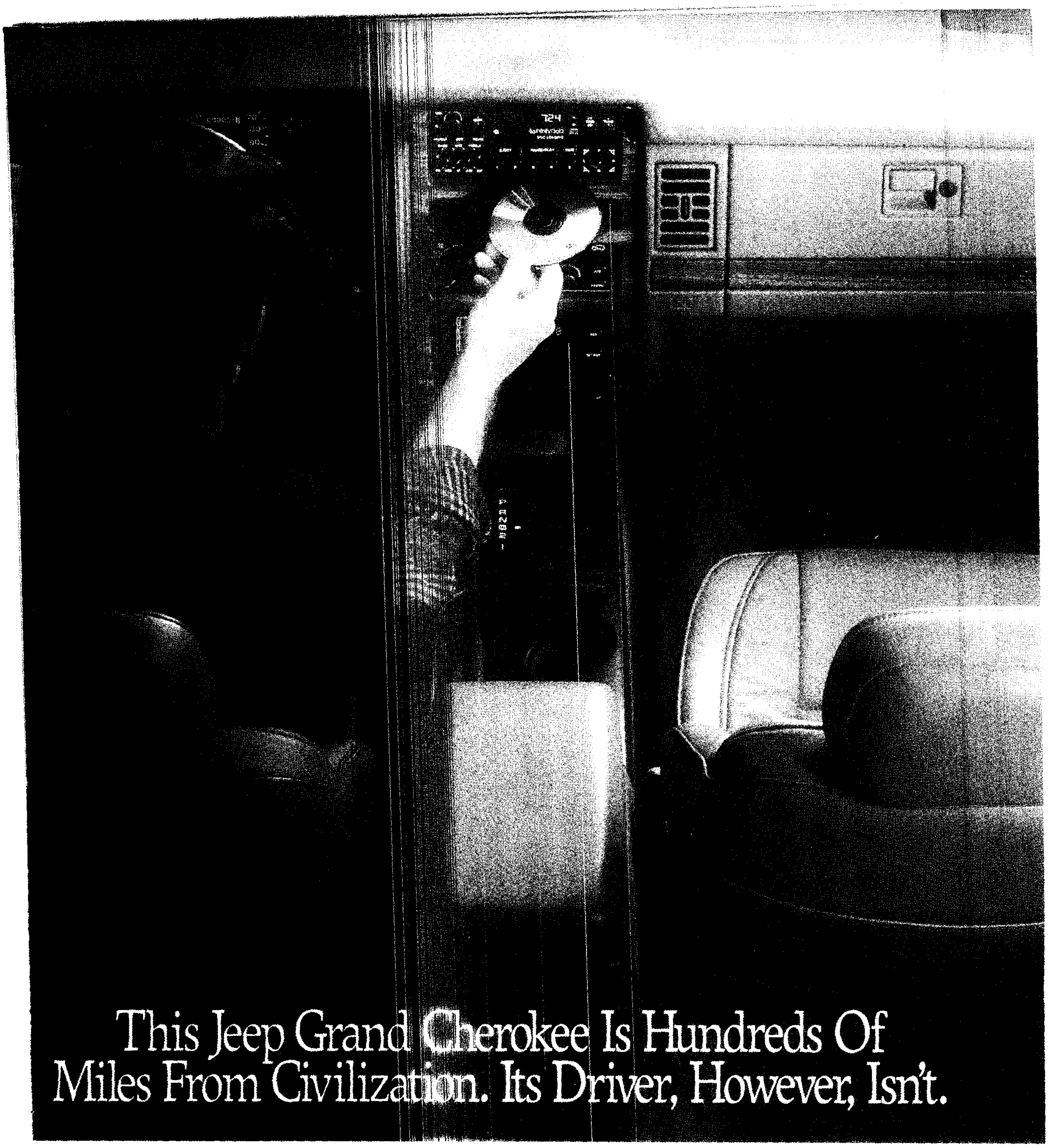
At halftime, there was some clumsy dancing, and the crowning, by acclaim, of a jester—an ex-jockey from Galway, who'd taken over the job of commentator and speculated on the ability of various players to score goals with unlikely parts of their anatomy.

After the match was over, conversation naturally turned to the Big Forthcoming Event. I thought that in the afterglow of the televised game the expatriates present might soften on the prospect of World Cup USA. But even the joy of having their favorite players brought to them couldn't change their minds. The phrase I heard most frequently in the Blind Pig was "They're going to ruin the game."



The big American sports feature a great deal of someone telling someone else what to do. In football, the quarterback's plays are orchestrated from the stands and the sidelines. In baseball, signals are relayed and received, and base coaches hold or send players, shuttling them on the taut conveyor that is the manager's imagination. In basketball, play is stopped every few minutes in order to allow for coaching instruction. These are, in fact, sports where the relationship between coach and players resembles that between a master and his slaves: do your master's bidding or be fined, verbally lashed, and publicly humiliated. Soccer, by contrast, permits no coaching interference while the game is being played, and the game is so fluid that it depends on feats of individual imagination. There is a large measure of freedom from the authoritarian chain of command.

It is this freedom that the soccer fanatic is afraid the United States will curtail, and the fear has a symbolic depth, in which soccer stands for a whole range of customs, ingrained habits, and good ideas threatened by American cultural and corporate interference. America, which prides itself on asserting the liberty of the individual, seems bent on refining its games to constrain the players—structurally, if not financially. Paradoxically, soccer, which was encouraged in the late nineteenth century by factory bosses eager to insure the continuing strength and fitness of their workers' bodies, has anarchically blossomed into a worldwide celebration of freewheeling working-class expression. We'll see in June how strong United States influence has been. Let's hope it's white dove that get released on opening day, and not CDs. ♦



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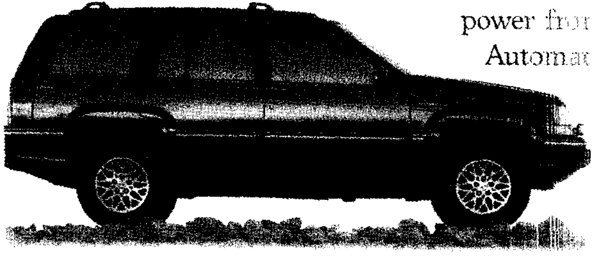

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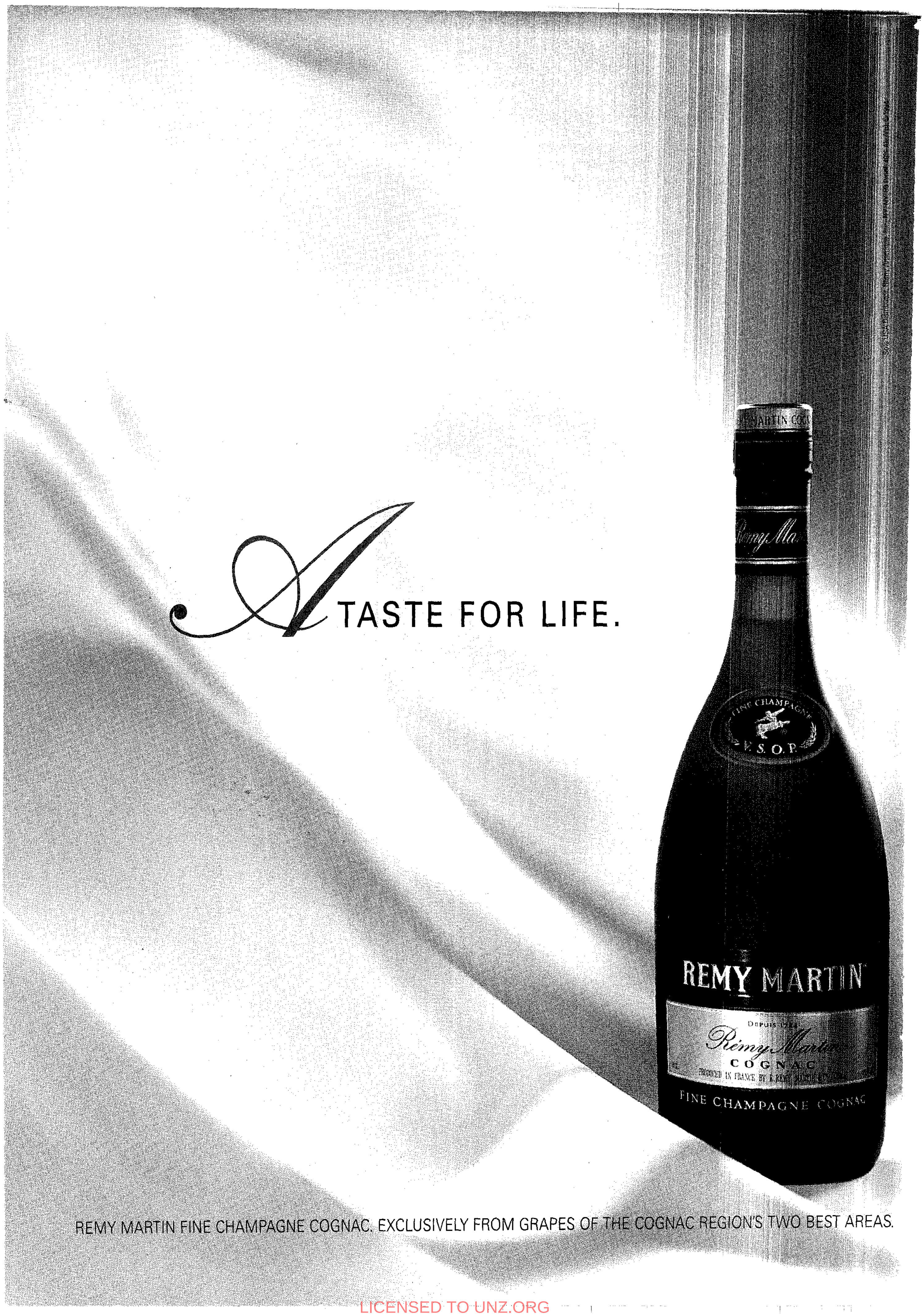

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